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A Narrative Inquiry into the Negotiations of Children's and Families' Lives in Classroom Curriculum Making

by

Jennifer Mitton ©

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Jennifer L. Mitton

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Date: June 17, 2008

Abstract

Bumping against dominant school stories of teacher as subject matter specialist and stories of mandated assessment that shaped the professional knowledge landscapes of schools in Turkey, I felt uncertain about how to make the lives of the youth I taught, and their families, part of my classroom curriculum making. In Canada, positioned as a teacher and coach, I had come to know curriculum as something relationally composed and made with youth and families. As I attended to my experiences in this unfamiliar context, I became interested in the ways classroom curriculum making shaped, and is shaped by, individuals' identities.

Attending from the perspectives of children, their families and teacher as they negotiated their lives within a curriculum of lives, this narrative inquiry multiperspectivally explores the experiences of children situated in a Canadian school. The study was situated on a school landscape being shifted by a growing diversity in the Canadian population as well as a rising focus upon assessment-driven accountability. My field texts include field notes as a participant observer in the classroom over a 10 month period, tape recorded and field noted conversations with the teacher, the children and their families, and samples of the children's written work, art work, and photography projects. Research texts were composed with the children as main characters informed by attending to their lives in relation with their families and the teacher. The dissertation provides narrative accounts of Lilly, Dana, and Owen, the children who participated in the inquiry.

Looking across the narrative accounts, I pulled forward tensions which resonated among them around the negotiation of curriculum making. Exploring the relational tensions shaping the children's lives and their interactions in curriculum making, I considered the ways tension may be understood as educative and as a part of curriculum making. When a curriculum of lives is negotiated, the negotiations are tension-filled, a process that asks all of us, children, teachers, families, researchers, to think about who we are in relation with each other and with the larger milieu.

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Prior to my arrival in Edmonton, I could not have anticipated the ways my learning would unfold relationally. The following is my attempt to express my gratitude and appreciation.

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This research could not have occurred without the enthusiasm and energy of Lilly, Owen, and Dana. You each made me think hard about what it means to live upon school landscapes. I so enjoyed our conversations and I thank you for the ways in which you have enriched my learning.

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CHAPTER ONE

Long Ago Beginnings: My Journey to this Inquiry

> If you sit with a child, looking at the sky, you can propose the endless possibilities in the clouds, saying, Look I see an old woman, I see a rabbit, I see a tree. A child will respond with visions you have not seen; children walk among strangers and find new Edens among the trees and animals and people of everyday life.
> (Bateson, 1994, p.51)

Reflecting upon Bateson's words, I am reminded of the beginnings of my doctoral work, a narrative inquiry that attends to multiple perspectives of children, families, and a teacher as I explore the experiences of 3 children situated in a Canadian elementary school in relation with their families and grade 3 teacher, Ms. Song Lee. The initial stages of this research began, in some ways, nearly 10 years ago in Turkey as I waited for my luggage in the Ankara Esenboğa Airport. Although I could occasionally see the outside world beyond the luggage carousel and the sliding glass doors, the minutes seemed long as I waited impatiently for my luggage to arrive. My eagerness to leave the arrival area may have been partly due to the journey itself and my desire to be outside the confines of an airport; yet, I also recall the urgency with which I wanted my "adventure" to begin. At the time, I understood my stay in Turkey as finite and with an ending. I was not aware of how it would become something life altering nor was I wakeful to the ways in which my stories to live by[1] (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) would shift as a result of the social and school landscapes of which I became a part.

I first became acquainted with Bateson's work and narrative inquiry within the context of my master's research, a study in which I relationally explored my identity within the context of my former high school in Ankara. Emerging from my reading of Bateson's work, I wrote in my master's thesis that my decision to teach in another country was "partly born out of [my] need to see the world differently" (Mitton, 2003, p.52). Yet, in pursuing this ideal of mine, I unknowingly created opportunities for tension, moments in which my stories to live by bumped against school, social, institutional, and cultural stories (Clandinin, Huber, Huber, Murphy, Murray Orr, Pearce, & Steeves , 2006) shaping my school's professional knowledge landscape[2] (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). In this situation I was forced to acknowledge my childhood and earlier professional knowledge landscapes as a formative self-presence.

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[1] Clandinin & Connelly's notion (1999) of stories to live by is a narrative term used to convey the interwoven nature of a teacher's knowledge, context, and identity.

Bumping against dominant school stories of a teacher as subject matter specialist and stories of mandated assessment that shaped the professional knowledge landscapes of schools in Turkey, I felt uncertain about how to make the lives of the youth I taught and their families a part of my classroom landscape. In Canada, positioned as a teacher and as a coach, I had been able to deepen my relationships with youth and their families. Learning alongside youth and families occurred away from classroom parameters, yet I had come to know curriculum as something relationally composed and made with youth and families. Living and teaching in Turkey awakened me to the ways my identity, my stories to live by, were shaped by the knowledge landscape on which I taught.

From Canada to Turkey and Back Again

On August 16, 1998 I boarded a plane in Chicago bound for Istanbul, Turkey. Having already spent most of the day flying from Halifax to Chicago, I was tired. I remember, however, the feeling of elation that rose within me once the plane began to lumber down the runway. The decision to go to Turkey and begin a new teaching career took planning, paperwork, and a nearly overwhelming desire to experience the unknown. This experience was initially planned to be a two-year event; but, 10 years later I find myself married and personally connected to the Turkish landscape. Prior to the beginning of my doctoral studies in 2005, I was also personally and professionally connected to a private high school for 7 years in Turkey's capital city of Ankara. Despite the amount of time I have lived and been acquainted with the city of Ankara and Turkey, there are still moments when I feel like a foreigner living in an unknown place. Understanding who I was in Turkey, as a person and as a teacher, was initially fraught with tension. I believe that what I originally perceived as strange in my new environment had, uncomfortably, emphasized what was different about me. I felt this particularly within the high school I taught. There, it seemed to me, the familiar was unfamiliar, a situation which encouraged me to look closely at "the confines of my own culture's impositions" (Bierwart, 1991, p.69).

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[2] The professional knowledge landscape (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) is a metaphor used to understand school contexts narratively as the metaphor conceptualizes space, place, and time and the particularities which distinguishes one school landscape from another in the form of its people, events, and relationships.

Once I began my master's degree in 2001 at Saint Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, a program which allowed me to take courses in the summer and later conduct my study in Turkey, my life within the context of the high school where I taught in Turkey became the focus of my research. Since I was at the heart of my inquiry, Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) conceptualization of narrative inquiry and its emphasis upon individuals' lived experiences and their expressed understandings of them was the methodology which spoke to me.

Using narrative inquiry as a methodological framework to guide me I lived alongside 3 of my students and 3 of my colleagues over a period of 14 months. The participants' understanding of their experiences upon our school landscape, situated within the service-learning project I coordinated, enabled me to explore and reflect upon my identity in these settings. Over time I came to understand the service-learning project as an extension of myself, something I had created in the hopes of feeling like the teacher I once was on Canadian school landscapes. My experiences as a person living and teaching in another culture are one of many examples in a demographically changing world[3]. Living in Turkey shaped the beginnings of my research interests in narrative inquiry and in the ways children and teachers make curriculum on shifting school landscapes.

While conducting my inquiry for my Master's research, my understanding of narrative inquiry grew. Introduced to an overview of many methodologies and choices during the course work of my Master's degree, I felt the pressure of having to choose a methodology and design a study which would hold up to scrutiny. As a result of my uncertainty, I found myself thinking about narrative inquiry as a method of study. It would take some time before I began to understand it as a way of thinking about experience with a view of the phenomenon under study (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). During this period of time in my Master's work while I read and speculated upon how to frame my inquiry, I was struck by the imperativeness of the verbs *question*, *measure*, *justify*. This led me to query, at times, my study's focus, and how those words and their underlying concepts related to me and what I was living.

---

[3] Globally, in the year 2005, approximately 191 million people live outside their country of birth. Between 1990 2005 the world's migrant stock rose by 36 million (United Nations, 2006).

Despite the ongoing tension I felt during my master's program, I did come away with a strong sense that what I experienced was a beginning. This beginning awoke my passion for narrative inquiry and for the narrative study of individuals' experiences and shifting identities. It also awoke an understanding within me that "life—as we come to it and as it comes to others—is filled with narrative fragments, enacted in storied moments of time and space, and reflected upon and understood in terms of narrative unities and discontinuities" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 17). My move to Turkey was disruptive and awakening, something I can also say that I experienced in my Master's program. Upon completion of my degree I wondered how to continue upon this new path of study and research.

From Turkey to Edmonton

My life experiences in Turkey as well as my master's program led me to doctoral work and my motivation to design a narrative inquiry situated within a changing school landscape. Since the completion of my master's program my understanding of narrative inquiry has shifted again as both phenomena under study and method of study. This shift in my understanding has much to do with the time I spent in the Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development at the University of Alberta alongside my supervisor Dr. D. Jean Clandinin and the many graduate students and scholars situated at the Centre. As a way to think about narrative inquiry I refer to Connelly and Clandinin's (2006) conceptualization of it. They write,

> Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied

> lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which their experience of the world enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular narrative view of experience as phenomena under study. (p. 477)

Adding to my evolving understanding of narrative inquiry research are recent contributions to the field which have also broadened my thinking about narrative inquiry cross-culturally (Andrews, 2007), conceptually (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007), navigationally (Clandinin, Pushor, & Murray-Orr, 2007), multiperspectivally (Clandinin *et al*, 2006), representationally (Ely, 2007), relationally (Huber & Clandinin, 2002), and historically (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007).

Upon my arrival at the University of Alberta in September 2005, initially, I envisioned my doctoral inquiry to be possibly about foreign teachers' school experiences in Turkey and how these shaped their identities, their stories to live by. Yet, the focus of my doctoral study evolved once I became immersed in courses and began to gain a better sense of the demographic changes occurring within Canada[4] and, Alberta, the province in which I was. In addition to these changes was my growing understanding of another presence in Canada, standardized testing, and how it appeared to be influential in Alberta schools.

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[4] The rapidly changing Canadian demographics have largely been due to international migration (Statscan a, 2005) and will be a continuing trend in the future (Statscan b, 2005). Alberta recorded the fastest growing population in Canada between July 1, 2004 and July 1, 2006 (Statscan, 2006).

As I became better acquainted with Jean Clandinin[5] and students situated at the Centre and in my courses, I began to hear more about the increased focus being placed upon teachers and students in relation to accountability mandates and standardized testing benchmarks. These conversations called forth for me memories of my experiences in an Ankara high school, a context shaped by high stakes testing.

Memories of a Former School Landscape

As a teacher my personal and professional life is composed of many first and last days within a variety of school buildings. My memories of these first and last days bring forth other memories interwoven within the context of a particular school landscape: Students, colleagues, classrooms and gymnasiums often come to mind temporally situated within past academic years. Whether my classroom was located within the school landscapes of Nova Scotia or of Ankara, it was a place in which I felt a sense of myself living alongside the youth I taught. This feeling was further emphasized in my classroom in Ankara. There, in that in-classroom[6] place (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995), I felt I could live out the stories I knew of myself in relation with the youth I taught.

---

[5] For the purposes of my dissertation I refer to my supervisor, Dr. D. Jean Clandinin, as Jean Clandinin. Naming was something I struggled with throughout the writing of this text in my attempts to clarify who I was referring to: Dr. D. Jean Clandinin, internationally known scholar or Jean, my supervisor, mentor, teacher, and friend with whom I discussed my work as it unfolded. Jean's first and last names are used to clarify this for the reader. I would emphasize I do not believe using both of Jean's names aptly expresses our relationship or the closeness of Ms. Song Lee's classroom, a place where we all, Jean Clandinin, Song Lee, the children and I, worked as friends and co-researchers.

[6] Clandinin and Connelly identified two different epistemological and moral places on the landscape, "in-classroom" and "out-of-classroom" places (1995, p. 14). In-classroom places were described as places where teachers lived out their teaching practices in relation with children. Out-of-classroom places were described as places where teachers were expected to live out practices shaped by policies and theories in order to uphold dominant stories of school.

Outside the reassuring walls of my classroom, however, I felt less sure about my teaching practices as my stories to live by frequently bumped against the school's expectations of success on Turkey's national university entrance exam[7]. Although English was not included on this exam[8], the influence of the university entrance exam was felt in each corner of the school. It topically lingered in staff meetings, in student conversations, and in the very language the school community used. A high score on this exam constituted a standard of success and it shaped the landscape of my school. The presence of this exam as a guiding curricular force sat uneasily within me. Over the years in relation to this exam and the expectations it created, I observed some youth break down in tears and colleagues disagree. Although the department, of which I was head, was not affected directly by the national university entrance exam, we were responsible for preparing students for an English proficiency exam which was administered by a local university. The expectation for students to do well on this exam was high as the school took great pride in the fact that native speakers of English, like me, were teaching the intricacies of the language in addition to its literature. I also wanted students to do well on this exam as I felt responsible for their success. Underlying this sense of responsibility were also my concerns that stories told of me as a teacher in out-of-classroom places (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995) were told in relation to the range of test scores achieved by the students I taught.

---

[7] The national university entrance exam, the ÖSS Sınav, is the exam each high school graduate is required to take and pass successfully if they are to enter into the university and faculty of their choice. In 2005, 1,671,726 individuals wrote an officially valid university entrance exam; however, in contrast, only 198,509 of these students were placed at four year universities (Higher Education Council (ÖSYM), 2005, ¶ 8).

[8] In addition to the national university entrance exam is the national university foreign languages exam, the YDS Sınav; students who plan on studying foreign languages and literature in university are also responsible for this exam. The students at my former high school, with the exception of my first three years as a teacher there, did not choose to study in the foreign languages stream and, thus, in this aspect the national exams did not directly affect the languages department in the school.

Over the years it seemed to me the influence of this exam grew in strength and I often found myself inwardly resenting its existence as it conflicted with the relationships I attempted to sustain within my classroom. In the weeks leading up to the English proficiency exam the curriculum was narrowed (Hoffman, J.V, Paris, S.G., Salas, R. Patterson, E., & Assaf, L., 2003) as my colleagues and I attempted to ensure that students were comfortable with its format while also knowing the school's administration was hopeful and expectant of success. Outside the door of my classroom, the landscape of the school was deeply contoured by plotlines of exam success, plotlines which shaped the stories told about all of us, students, families, and teachers, in the school.

My memories of the examination system in Turkey and how it affected my former school as well as me in the classroom are important to me. These memories have lingered and, in many ways, made me attentive to the accountability emphasis I was noticing in Alberta. As I grew more wakeful to the context in which I was situated as a doctoral student, I began to wonder more about teachers and children in Alberta and what they and the professional knowledge landscapes of their schools were experiencing within the context of these exams.

A Shape to My Inquiry Emerges

The first year of my doctoral program was a year composed of uncertainty and excitement. It was a time when I found myself reading intently and listening to what others had to say about their research. Not only did this create opportunities for me to see things in new ways, it also created moments for me to look forwards and think about the next step I needed to take to bring about my study.

Returning to the fall of 2005 and the tentative beginnings of my research inquiry, I recall my conversations with Jean Clandinin and how they contributed to my growing wakefulness[9] (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) to the possibilities of conducting a study in Canada. In late October, I learned about Jean Clandinin's and colleagues[10] upcoming Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) project entitled A Narrative Inquiry into Children's and Teachers' Curriculum Making Experiences in an Achievement Testing Era (2006-2008). One of the guiding purposes of this study was to understand the experiences of teachers, children and families of diversity as they composed their lives within institutional narratives (Clandinin et al., 2006) increasingly focused on achievement. Based upon my experiences in a high school in Ankara, alongside Turkish and foreign national teachers as our lives were shaped by the presence of the national university entrance exam, I was fascinated by the premise of this study. By mid November, 2006, I had agreed to situate my doctoral study within the larger study.

In response to our ongoing conversations about this research project, I began to visualize throughout the fall as well as the winter of 2006 how my inquiry might emerge from my own narratives of experience and be situated within the larger SSHRC study. This process coincided with Jean Clandinin's narrative inquiry[11] course, a class where I, throughout the winter and early spring of 2006, wrote narrative beginnings about my childhood, adolescence, and professional life as I considered what I knew about landscapes, changing landscapes, and the tension-filled movements occurring in the transition between them. Writing these stories helped me to think about my life situated in home and school contexts and to consider the ways my narratives of experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) informed my research interests. Becoming a part of the SSHRC research project shaped my beginnings within the study. Over time, however, and living in relation with who I am, my inquiry's focus upon the school experiences of children in relation with their families and teacher as they negotiated their lives within a curriculum of lives also shaped the larger SSHRC study.

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[9] Wakefulness is a notion used in narrative inquiry to convey the necessity of "ongoing reflection" as it is a type of inquiry that "asks…inquirers to be wakeful, and thoughtful, about all of our inquiry decisions" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 184).

[10] This work is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada through a grant held by D. Jean Clandinin, M. Shaun Murphy, Anne Murray Orr and Janice Huber.

[11] The course I refer to was entitled Narrative and Story in Research and Curriculum Studies (EDES 601). For each week of the course there were a set of class readings. Written dialogues were written in response to these texts. In addition to these weekly assignments was the writing of storied moments. Each week I met with my "works-in-progress" group, a group of 3 students, who responded to my work alongside Jean Clandinin and her written response.

My growing understanding of research studies and of 'in progress' research at the Centre for Research for Teacher Education & Development also contributed to the growth of my inquiry . Recent research has attended to the lives of teachers and children as they negotiated curriculum and of tension where their lives bumped against the plotlines shaping school landscapes (Clandinin et al., 2006). In terms of my conceptual development, this body of work helped me to think about teachers' and children's diverse lives and how they are shaped by school landscapes in subtle and complex ways. Other 'in progress' work which also contributed to the development of my own inquiry were the studies of Marilyn Huber (2008) and Guming Zhao (2008) as they attended to adolescent children's stories and how they were shaped by both school landscapes and by each family's storied personal, social and cultural landscape[12]. Their work alongside Clandinin et al.'s work drew me to the complexity of the school experiences of children who had immigrated to Canada.

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[12] Huber's and Zhao's work draws upon an earlier study conducted by Debbie Pushor (2001) who looked at the relation between parent's positioning on the landscapes of schools.

As I considered my future inquiry and its contextual possibilities, I also participated in the gatherings held each Tuesday at the Centre, a period of time allotted to "research issues"[13]. Each week as I sat at the Centre table and listened to visiting scholars and fellow graduate students describe their lives and the various research stages they were in, I took notes, contributed comments, and asked questions about their unfolding work. These weekly conversations encouraged me to look forward and helped me to imagine the particulars of my study. At the same time I also came to see the advantages of conducting a study in a Canadian school while being able to further learn from experienced individuals established at the Centre.

In addition to Huber's and Zhao's work, I was particularly drawn to another Centre study that of Claire Desrochers' (2006)[14]. At that time, Claire was in the process of writing and revising the drafts of her dissertation. Often at research issues she would read aloud pages of her work. From these regular gatherings I had the opportunity to learn more about her study and its focus on restorying preservice teachers' knowledge of diversity by having them participate in a community-based service learning project. Her work opened up another way for me to think about diverse individuals' lives meeting in particular places and how these lived moments contributed new understandings of diversity for the preservice teacher participants involved in Claire's inquiry.

Working alongside people at the Centre and hearing about their research helped me to see the connections between my own research interests and theirs. Having the opportunity to write about my life and discuss my research interests, alongside graduate students and scholars, contributed to my study's multiperspectival focus upon children's lives in relation with their families and teacher as they relationally composed and negotiated curriculum on a shifting school landscape.

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[13] Every Tuesday, from 12:30 to 2:00pm, the Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development hosts ongoing weekly "research issues" conversations for graduate students and faculty to share and refine their research projects.

[14] Desrocher's work draws upon an earlier study conducted by Carla Nelson (2003); Carla's study was a narrative inquiry which explored the teaching experiences of 5 teachers from Canada, including herself, working alongside Kenyan teachers in Kenya. Nelson's work explored their experiences of being dispositioned as teachers in an unfamiliar context and its relation to their shifting teacher identities.

Situating My Research Puzzle[15]

In recent years schools across Canada have undergone significant changes. Some of the changes shaping the shifting landscapes of schools are an increasing focus upon assessment-driven accountability and mandated achievement testing for teachers and children. Another shaping presence is a demographically changing population[16] and the increasing diversity of teachers', children's, and families' lives. Schools in Alberta exemplify the types of contextual changes occurring in Canadian schools. It would seem the landscapes of Canadian schools, like many schools located in economically strong North American contexts, will continue to be and grow more diverse. Thinking about changing school landscapes as the milieu where children's, families', and teachers' lives intersect, emphasizes their complexity and the unique tensions individuals experience in particular school contexts. My inquiry emerges from my interest in the interconnected ways children's identities are relationally shaped by their teachers, families, and peers and the contextual tensions individuals experience as they negotiate who they are.

The development of my research puzzle was a process that occurred over time in context and in relation with others. Writing my narrative beginnings was not something done in isolation. These relational beginnings allowed me to not only imagine the shape of my study, but also emphasized to me the importance of relationships in narrative inquiry work. The response I received during this developmental stage of my study also encouraged me to be mindful of context, in this case, Canadian school landscapes, and prior research about curriculum making (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992) in diverse school settings (Clandinin et al., 2006; Desrochers, 2006; Huber, 2008; Murphy, 2004; Murray Orr, 2005; Nelson, 2003; Pushor, 2001; Zhao, 2008) and the formative presence of mandated testing (Abrams & Madus, 2003; Balfanz, Legters, West, & Weber, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2004; Finnigan & Gross; 2007; Hoffman et al., 2003; Rex & Nelson, 2004; Hollingsworth & Gallego, 2007; Valli & Buese, 2007). By being attentive to what also lay around me, the milieu, the significance of my research puzzle emerged. My study's tentative beginnings shifted from me and what I had lived to now look at children's, families', and teachers' lives in school situated within a school landscape experiencing change.

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[15] Research puzzle is a term used to convey the constructed and multiple aspects of a narrative inquiry.

[16] The 2006 Census enumerated 6,186,950 foreign-born people in Canada. They accounted for virtually one in five (19.8%) of the total population, the highest proportion in 75 years (Statscan, 2007).

The Research Puzzle

My research puzzle focuses upon the school experiences of children in relation with their families and teacher around the negotiation of their lives during classroom curriculum making. Particular attention was paid to the school landscape as the children's stories to live by bumped against others' and against the stories of school.

Conceptual Considerations Underlying My Research Puzzle

My teaching experiences in Turkey caused me to wonder about the relational influences of school landscapes upon individuals' identities. As I attended to my experiences in an unfamiliar context, I became interested in the ways school landscapes and curriculum making[17] shape, and are shaped by, individuals' stories to live by. In my attempts to comprehend the children's shifting understandings of themselves, I was mindful that children's lives in school are relationally shaped by teachers, parents, friends, peers, and school policies. As a way to conceptualize the relational nature of lives in school, I drew upon Clandinin and Connelly's (1988/1995) narrative understandings of teacher knowledge: personal practical knowledge and professional knowledge landscape.

Engaging with teachers in school Connelly and Clandinin (1988) came to understand teachers' classroom practices as expressions of their personal practical knowledge. Connelly and Clandinin define personal practical knowledge as:

> a term designed to capture the idea of experience in a way that allows us to talk about teachers as knowledgeable and knowing persons.... [It] is in the teacher's past experience, in the teacher's present mind and body, and in the future plans and actions. Personal practical knowledge is found in the teacher's practice. It is, for any teacher, a particular way of reconstructing the past and the intentions of the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation. (p.25)

Teachers' personal practical knowledge lives in relation with their school contexts, the landscapes, in which they are situated. The professional knowledge landscape (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) is a metaphor used to understand school contexts narratively as it conceptualizes space, place, and time and the diversity which distinguishes one landscape from another in the form of its people, events, and relationships. School landscapes are understood as dynamic and ever changing by the individuals who are situated within them and by outside policies and theories.

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[17] As children's and teachers' lives meet in classrooms, curriculum is made. Curriculum making (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992) is a dynamic process textured by individuals' experiences and is understood to occur within the intersection of Schwab's (1962) four curriculum commonplaces of teacher, learner, subject matter, and milieu.

Helping to further understand the complexities of the professional knowledge landscape are the secret and cover stories teachers live and tell. Secret and cover stories are closely aligned with particular, contextual locations on the school landscape. Of in-classroom places and secret stories Clandinin and Connelly (1995) write:

> The privacy of the classroom plays an important epistemological function. It is a safe place, generally free from scrutiny, where teachers are free to live stories of practice. These lived stories are essentially secret ones. (p.13)

Teachers live and tell cover stories when they feel their personal practical knowledge is in conflict with school stories and the story of school. Away from stories of school, secret stories refer to a teacher's personal practical knowledge at work. Beyond classroom parameters, Clandinin and Connelly (1995) note are out-of-classroom places. Out-of-classroom places are shaped by dominant stories of school and prescriptive policies, places where teachers are expected to live out plotlines as certain expert characters in the story of school. In these places, shared with other teachers and administration, teachers may tell cover stories as a way to uphold the story of school. A deeply embedded story shaping the professional knowledge landscape, Clandinin & Connelly (1995) argue, is the "theory driven practice" (p. 8) story. They suggest that because this story is largely unquestioned, it has "the quality of a sacred[18] story" (p.8).

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[18] Clandinin and Connelly (1995) draw upon Crites's (1971) notion of the scared story. Crites describes sacred stories as subtly present and largely unquestioned. He suggests sacred stories "seem to be elusive expressions of stories that cannot be fully and directly told...these stories lie too deep in the consciousness of the people to be directly told" (p.294).

Thinking about the connections between teacher knowledge and school contexts is a way of understanding people as living on school landscapes and landscapes living in people. As teachers shape landscapes with their knowledge, they too are shaped by the contexts in which they are situated. In order to convey this relationship between a teacher's knowledge, context, and identity, Clandinin & Connelly (1999) conceptualized the narrative notion "stories to live by".

Recent research has seen Clandinin and co-researchers (2006) attend to the ways children's, families, and teachers' lives in school intersect as they negotiated a curriculum that was attentive to the diversity of their classroom communities. It was found these negotiations were, at times, tension-filled as individuals' stories to live by met and occasionally bumped against others' stories to live by and with institutional narratives, that is, stories of school and school stories.

My thinking was also informed by Clandinin and Connelly's (1988, 1992) conceptualization of curriculum as enacted by teachers and children at the "intersection" of Schwab's (1962) curriculum commonplaces of teacher, learner, subject matter, and milieu. The intersection of these curriculum commonplaces is the site in which teachers and students, in relation with one another, "live out a curriculum" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, p.365). Underpinning their notion of curriculum is Dewey's (1938) philosophy and his ideas of "situation", "continuity" and "interaction" (p.43-44), a philosophy which emphasizes individual knowledge and experience as part of curriculum making as it contextually occurs over time. Curriculum is, therefore, a process dynamically enacted and textured by the individual experiences of children and teachers learning and shaping one another's lives in context.

Within this dynamic portrayal of curriculum I included Aoki's (1991, 1993) conceptualization of curriculum as a space which lives between the planned and mandated curricula and the lived curricula of the classroom. The enacted curriculum, as actualized by the teacher, is a transformed space acknowledging curricular outcomes and individuals' experiences. Aoki's notion also emphasizes the contextual, temporal, spatial, and relational construction of knowledge in the classroom and the significant part each member plays in the construction of his/her own curriculum.

The temporal unfolding of my life and my attempts to comprehend the twists and turns of it are understood and expressed narratively. Carr (1986) refers to these attempts in terms of "narrative coherence" as individuals endeavor "to maintain or restore…in the face of an ever-threatening, impending chaos at all levels" (p.91). As a narrative inquirer I understand that unlike other research methodologies, narrative inquiry does not isolate experiences to make meaning from them; but, rather, I understand myself as "always *in the midst*—located somewhere along the dimensions of time, place, the personal, and the social" in addition to being "in the middle of a nested set of stories—ours and theirs" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, italics in the original, p.63).

Revisiting the Research Puzzle

Using this theoretical framework enabled me to explore, over time, the school experiences of children in relation with their families and teacher. Employing narrative understandings of teacher knowledge, context, and identity and curriculum making, I inquired into the complexities shaping the children's interactions within classroom curriculum making.

Meeting Ms. Song Lee[19]

I first met Song[20] in July of 2006. Our meeting was a result of previous conversations that Jean Clandinin and Song had had during the months of May and June as they negotiated mine and Jean Clandinin's presence in Song's classroom. I was involved in this process from afar while I was in Turkey but helped compose documents[21] needed for entrance to the school. From the outset we negotiated with Song her involvement as a co-researcher alongside us.

Once I began entering the classroom on a regular basis at the end of September, Song, Jean Clandinin, and I negotiated further details surrounding our involvement in Song's classroom. Song was well established at Streamside Elementary School; she was someone whom colleagues and the administration relied upon and who parents of the school spoke appreciatively about. Because of her years of experience at Streamside, Song knew many of the children in her classroom from previous years and/or from having taught their older siblings.

The Research Process Situated Within a Shifting Classroom Landscape

Beginning in September, 2006, three weeks after the school year had begun, until mid May, 2007. I was in Song's grade 3 classroom[22] three afternoons a week at Streamside Elementary School, a school located in a rapidly growing city in western

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[19] Pseudonyms are used throughout the dissertation to preserve anonymity of those involved.

[20] For purposes of my dissertation I have chosen to refer to Ms. Song Lee as Song. This is respectfully intended and also to convey to the reader our relationship as friends and co-researchers.

[21] The documents composed during this time were the ethics approval application required by the University of Alberta and Faculty of Education as well as the school board approval application required by the school board in which Song's school is situated. An overview of our research was also composed for the principal of Song's school as her approval was also needed.

[22] Choosing Song's classroom to be my inquiry site was guided by the research purposes underpinning the larger SSHRC study and our focus upon the diversity of children's, families, and teachers' lives being lived on school landscapes increasingly shaped by achievement testing. The purposes of the SSHRC study resonated with my own research interests and experiences as depicted earlier in the chapter.

Canada. The 27 children and Song warmly welcomed Jean Clandinin into the classroom at the beginning of the school year. I entered the classroom two weeks later than Jean Clandinin when I returned from Turkey. The children were a culturally and religiously diverse group and some of the children in Song's classroom were new to the school[23]. Also contributing to the landscape of Song's classroom was the presence of mandated testing, a series of tests in math and English language arts that the children took in May and June, 2007.

The focus of the achievement testing program for grades 3, 6 and 9 in Alberta is based upon provincially determined standards for children and youth[24] (Alberta Education). The Grade 3 provincial achievement test is administered annually in English/French language arts and mathematics. The language arts achievement test is composed of 2 sections: reading and writing. The math achievement test is also a two step process: timed number facts and a longer written test focused upon items studied throughout the school year. Each test section for both math and language arts is administered on different days.

Marking of these tests is done locally and centrally. Classroom teachers may mark tests by using the answer keys and scoring guides provided. Tests are then marked again centrally by accredited provincial evaluators. There are two standards of student performance: *acceptable standard* and *standard of excellence*. The score on a student's test determines the standard. Teachers who have graded and submitted their grades will receive a confidential report about their marking. School testing results are made available to school authorities in late August; reports summarizing multi-grade results arrive in September. The media receive these results in late September. It is up to the individual school and its authorities to release its results to its local community. The children of Song's classroom received their grade 3 achievement testing results in the mail at the beginning of their grade 4 school year.

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[23] In early December the number of children in the classroom dipped to 26 as one child and his family moved to the United States; but a new child soon joined Song's group in late January and the total number of children remained at 27 for the remainder of the school year.

[24] Information about the grade 3 provincial achievement test in Alberta was retrieved on April 3, 2008 from the Alberta Education website (www.education.alberta.ca/admin/testing.aspx).

As a teacher who lived on a heavily tested school landscape in Turkey, I was particularly interested in the presence of this test and in the ways the children and Song negotiated their lives around it. From my experiences I know this kind of testing can potentially shape curriculum, relationships, and stories told of teachers, children, and families in schools. I arrived with expectations of observing testing tensions, yet based upon my observations these did not unfold for the children. This was due, I believe, to the curricular choices Song made throughout the course of the school year as she strove to make the classroom a place for the children's lives and their experiences. In doing so Song lived with much tension[25].

In mid May, 2007, after my time in the classroom was completed, I returned to Turkey. Jean Clandinin continued to be in the classroom for the remainder of the school year. During this period of time she composed and sent field notes to me in Turkey. It was then that I began to analyze field texts and to write interim research texts in the form of narrative accounts. I continued to be in touch with the children[26] I worked with, Lilly, Dana, and Owen, their families, and Song while I was away. In September, 2007, I returned to Canada for a period of 2 months and then again in March and April, 2008. During September and October, 2007, conversations continued with the children and their families. This was followed by a conversation in March 2008. Each time I met with the families and children I shared my writing as it progressed. Interim research texts were also shared with Song in the summer and fall of 2007 and February, 2008, via e-mail correspondence. My study involvement with the children, their families, and Song occurred over a period of 18 months.

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[25] In a recent paper, we inquired into the multiple tensions teachers experienced as they lived in their classrooms and crossed the boundary into out-of-classroom places on a professional knowledge landscape being restoried by mandated assessment requirements (Murphy, Mitton, Murphy, Huber, Chung, Tinkham, Murray Orr, & Clandinin, 2008).

[26] Determining which of the children I would attend closely to was a relationally involved process. I was interested in children with personal experience or family knowledge of life in other contexts. Also important to me was that the children and their families seemed interested in talking about their experiences. Song and her knowledge of the school and its members guided me throughout this process. She introduced me to the families and made the initial phone calls to their homes to see if they might be interested in participating in my study.

Inquiring into Earlier Experiences

The following chapter shares some of the narrative beginnings I wrote in the winter and early spring of 2006. Prior to entering Song's classroom at Streamside Elementary School in September, 2006, narratively inquiring into my own experiences was my attempt to better understand the emergence of my own stories to live by and how they might inform the study and my time in the classroom. The following personal narratives are composed of recollected memories. These stories appear as integrally woven parts of the text and their significance is theoretically "unpacked" in an ongoing manner. I have chosen to tell these stories to represent those meaningful moments in my life which "geyser-like" have risen to my attention. What should also be emphasized is that although these stories are remembered in a certain fashion, the telling of the stories and their subsequent retellings are "of the moment" as I believe new life experiences will imbue these moments with further meaning (Dewey, 1938).

Chapter two represents a beginning to the field texts I created as well as the process of interpreting and representing such texts as seen in the later chapters about the children, Owen, Dana, and Lilly, and their families. The following introspective process was a course of action in which I also engaged the children and their families. Doing so allowed me to better understand their experiences as they happened over time in relation with others in specific contexts.

CHAPTER TWO

Narratives of Experience Situated within Shifting Landscapes

Growing Wakeful to Those Around Me

> It's about waking up. A child wakes up over and over again, and notices what she's living. She dreams along, loving the exuberant life of the senses, in love with beauty and power, oblivious of herself, and then suddenly bingo, she wakes up and feels herself alive. She notices her own awareness. And she notices that she is set down here, mysteriously, in a going world. The world is full of fascinating information that she can collect and enjoy. And the world is public; its issues are moral and historical ones. (Dillard, 1987, p.144)

As I look back upon my past, to what Kerby (1991) refers to as "the cumulative horizonal structure of experience itself" (p.21), I realize my understanding about who I am continues to shift as a result of my experiences, relationships, and personal landscapes[27]. Many years before I entertained the idea of living and teaching overseas, my childhood interests were influenced by my elementary school friends and teachers as well as the worlds of outdoor play and books. Hoffman (1989) suggests our early contexts live within us intensely for nothing can be like "the landscapes that we saw first, and to which we gave ourselves wholly, without reservations" (p.75). The landscapes of my childhood, from the beaches along the Northumberland Strait to the hilly streets of Halifax, are what I long for at certain times of the year. My sense of time is closely connected to the seasons and to the weather of my childhood home. These places often remind me of their presence in varying forms, a brisk seaside breeze or an early morning fog lying heavily over a harbor are enough to recall landscapes of long ago. The memories of such moments and places live within me. For how can I erase the memory of my father and me, both of us eating handfuls of sugarberries along the cliff of my grandparents' cottage from the place within which it occurred? Located within a specific time and place, this particular recollection is interwoven with memories of other cherished people, events, and places. My link to home is the emotional tie I, like many people, live with.

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[27] As I reflected upon my childhood, I drew upon Connelly and Clandinin's (1999) metaphor of the professional knowledge landscape. The landscape metaphor draws my awareness to the ways a person's identity lives in relation with context. As an adult, my life is shaped by particular landscapes situated within Turkey and Canada; as a child, my life was more firmly located within home and school contexts in the Maritimes. Both examples are landscapes which shape my self-understanding. Landscapes are not static sites, however; like individuals' stories to live by, landscapes are also changing, intellectually and morally influenced by people and their shifting understanding of themselves and others.

Growing up in Halifax, Nova Scotia during the 1970's in the developing neighborhood of Clayton Park, my life was then shaped by the people and the landscape I interacted with. During the school year Halifax was the backdrop of my experiences, but school vacations and weekends allowed exploration of other landscapes with family members along the coast of the Northumberland Strait in Pictou County and Moncton, New Brunswick. Attending to diversity first occurred in the differences I noticed in the landscapes about me. Whether it was the sandiness of Parlee Beach, the forested hillsides of Pictou County, or the paved sidewalks of Halifax, I was aware of the ways landscapes contextually shaped my activities. Contributing to my stories to live by throughout these early years were the relationships I had while attending elementary school.

Each day as I walked to school down the hill, across the busy road, and up through the dense wood, I encountered differences along the way. My walks to school mirrored the temperature and season surrounding me, hasty walks often signaled wind, rain, and/or freezing cold and slow trudging steps were often the sign of deep snow. The thick wood which announced the end of my walk to school also reflected the physical mystery I found about me. Different from the paved streets of my neighborhood, the green of my lawn, and even the trees beyond my family's backyard fence, this miniature forest clung to the side of a steep hill. Large exposed tree roots made climbing up and over them challenging for me and the little light which the trees allowed in cast a dusky glow to its interior. My mother often asked me to walk around the wood by taking the sidewalk which ran parallel to it. I believe I often dismissed her words of caution and walked daily through the woods being struck by the secrecy of the place.

My curiosity for the world was not simply allocated to what I encountered in my daily life. My desire for answers and mystery also led me down interior pathways as I strove to understand who I was and what part I was to play in the world about me. At the time, like many children my age, my understanding of myself and who I should be in the world was deeply influenced by my parents and by my teachers. My early stories to live by were shaped by the push and pull of my home and school landscapes as I attempted to live out what was narratively acceptable in each context. These were formative years. Interwoven within these recollections are also memories of my attempts to understand who I was in the world separate from what people thought I should be.

It was a period in my childhood in which I would lie awake in my bed at night and question the objects and people around me. It was a way to put myself to sleep if the book I was reading had not done the trick. The questions would begin innocuously—*Why do we have tiles on the bathroom walls and not the living room*? *What does the Earth look like from space?*—and sometimes this game would peter out harmlessly. There were moments, however, when the questions themselves would not wait for answers, each question would build upon the previous one leading me down a dangerous path of uncertainty.—*What is the Earth made of*? *Where does it come from*? *Why is the Earth here in the first place*? *What is the Earth's purpose*? Long before the death of Mandy, the family dog, I remember wondering about life and death. During times likes these my heart would beat faster and my breath would come in short rapid bursts as ultimately I was led to the questions I did not want to think about—*What am I made of*? *Where do I come from*? *If the Earth doesn't have a purpose, do I have a purpose*? *How long will I live*? *How long will Mom and Dad live*? *Who will take care of me when they die*? *What happens when I die*?—Tortured by these thoughts and a lack of answers, I would eventually climb out of my bed and call down to the only people I thought would be able to provide me with some comfort, my parents. "Mom—I'm having bad dreams."

When I became older, my mother confessed she used to dread these "dreams" of mine. She said I would come down the stairs sit on her lap and whisper "What happens when you're gone? What happens when I'm gone?" I remember some evenings sitting on hers or on my father's lap inconsolable with fear as my future lay out before me, a wide, flat landscape of uncertainty.

Despite the inner fear I felt by this playing game, and the uncertain place it often positioned me within, there seemed to be on my part a fascination with the unknown, away from the comforting rules of my parents and of my teachers. However, at the same time, I could only stay briefly in this liminal place before I would seek the comfort of my parents. As a result of playing this game, there were times when I was inconsolable to my parent's attempts at reassurance, yet I returned frequently to it as a child. The decision to play this game makes me question my motivation to do so and the contradictions I seemed to be living between wanting the comfort of my parents while playing a game which disrupted this comfort. Perhaps, these early memories of me as a child, lying awake at night considering what lay beyond the comforting boundaries of home and school, in some ways, resurfaced again years later in my decision to leave Canada and to live in Turkey.

Interwoven within my memories of my younger self are the experiences I had at school. I recall how my classmates also reflected the diversity I noticed in the physical landscape. Like myself there were other children of Scottish-English origin; also present were children of African, Chinese, Greek, Japanese, Norwegian, and Pakistani heritage. The in-classroom place shaped my life with its reading circles and group projects and often bubbled over into play in out-of-classroom places like the playground and the school corridors during recess and lunch hours. I recall how relationally the out-of-classroom places on the landscape soon broadened once I became older and began to play at some of my classmates' homes. These out-of-classroom places and the experiences which occurred within them deepened my understanding of others and the in-classroom place, a place which was characterized by my relationships and my budding understanding of myself in relation with my peers and teacher.

Looking back upon grade 3, I also recall the tension of these friendships which at times spilled over into arguments and insults. In particular is a memory of my first day of school in grade 3 in which my teacher, Mrs. Jay, looked on as I and a classmate exchanged hateful words. The physicality of this first day school experience I recall in the memory of my classmate's face inches away from mine and in the presence of Mrs. Jay lingering nearby as we lashed out at one another. This grade was a turning point in my school career as it seems to me I became more conscious of my appearance, friendships, and grades. The outer reaction of my classmate to my appearance, the source of our argument, bumped into my stories to live by and caused me to reconsider what I knew of myself in relation with those I went to school. I began to understand that differences may be viewed in multiple ways as I became mindful of what my peers thought about me. Learning this expanded my early landscapes of family and teachers to now also include my peers. This particular moment of being noted as different by my classmate stands out in my memory, particularly when I recall Mrs. Jay standing nearby.

Reflecting upon this experience makes me wonder about my teacher, Mrs. Jay, and how her personal practical knowledge was shaped by the professional knowledge landscape of our school. How did prescriptive policies sent down the conduit (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996) bump, shift, and shape the landscape of Mrs. Jay's small classroom? What secret stories were being lived out by Mrs. Jay in the context of our classroom? What cover stories did Mrs. Jay tell in out-of-classroom places that upheld stories of school? As I speculate about my former grade 3 teacher, I consider a teacher's personal practical knowledge within curriculum making.

Although regular spelling tests and subject matter quizzes do come to mind when I picture the curricular landscape of Mrs. Jay's classroom, this remembered landscape is also infused with memories of story writing, reading circles, and collaborative group projects. Threads of Mrs. Jay's personal practical knowledge are interwoven within my memories of classroom activities. Her beliefs in literacy and collaboration seemed to be some of the guiding principles infusing our classroom routines, a manner of living that Clandinin and Connelly (1992) suggest is a way "teachers and students live out a curriculum" (p.365). Thinking about curriculum as lived rather than prescribed is disruptive to a dominant story told of curriculum, one which upholds a larger narrative of curriculum as something static and product oriented.

Stories Told in Relation to Changing Contexts

Once I entered grade 6 in the junior high building across the field from my beloved elementary school, the story I lived by as a reader soon bumped into what others expected of me. In junior high I discovered my love of reading conflicted with my new friends and their stories to live by. This back and forth tension between who I was at home and who I was at school is apparent to me now as I remember how I chose to not emphasize my love of reading at school, but, rather, allowed it to remain hidden safely at home. On the junior high school landscape my stories to live by were adjusted according to my friends' expectations and to my junior high school's social hierarchy. This was a scenario that was clear to my family, but only became clear to me once my family and I moved from the city of Halifax to the smaller community of Moncton, New Brunswick the summer before I entered grade 8.

As I reflect upon this time in my adolescence, and the tension I remember feeling at home and at school and the types of stories I was telling in those different contexts, I am drawn to Clandinin and Connelly's (1995) finding that "the professional knowledge landscape that teachers inhabit creates epistemological dilemmas that we understand narratively in terms of secret, sacred, and cover stories" (p.4). This idea was something I was particularly drawn to as I wrote the narrative accounts about Owen, Dana, and Lilly in relation with their families and Song. I often wondered if epistemological dilemmas occurred for them as I considered their experiences at home and at school and their movement between these landscapes.

Falling Asleep on a School Landscape

Initially, my life in Turkey was characterized by uncertainty despite my attempts to understand my life in a new place. My classroom provided me with a sense of belonging; but, perplexed by my own differences, this sense was marked by the parameters of my room and was a fragile state easily disrupted by the sudden appearance of a parent or an administrator hovering in the doorway. My years as a teacher in the school established me as one of its members, yet, I also lived with the feeling that I was an outsider. Tentatively my sense of security developed and, over time, the newness of my surroundings dissipated. I now question and wonder about what I had fallen asleep to (Greene, 1993).

Reflecting upon the day I arrived in Ankara and to the luggage carousel where I patiently stood, I was unaware that the most powerful piece of baggage I owned was already in my possession. McIntosh's (1988) notion of white privilege as an invisible knapsack containing particular advantages makes me reconsider the ways my heritage and western education provided me with benefits and awakens me to a larger social narrative shaping my school. Taking into account the trust that was placed in my ability to teach children who were culturally, linguistically, and religiously different from my own upbringing as well as lead a department composed of culturally different people, disrupts my former beliefs about the idea of meritocracy (McIntosh, 1988). As I reflect upon the privileges I had at my former school, I wonder about the lives of children and families who live without the security of the invisible knapsack. Perhaps, they do not have the opportunity to fall asleep to their surroundings and on a daily basis are wide awake to what they experience as their stories to live by bump into others' and dominant institutional, social, cultural, and political narratives.

As I inquired into my experiences as a teacher in Turkey, I woke up to the larger narratives that shaped how I was positioned on my school landscape. Reading theoretical literature that focused upon curriculum making in diverse school contexts, I began to see the ways in which curriculum making attended to the particularities of individuals' lives rather than to the larger narratives shaping contexts and people.

Growing Wakeful to Teacher as Curriculum Maker

Britzman (1992) asks "how might the practices of curriculum encourage everyone involved to reflect upon who they are becoming as they go about the work of education?" (p. 253). Living between institutional policy and teacher student relationships, Britzman (1992) suggests, is a space of interaction, a space which reflects a dilemma between "theories and practices" (p.257). Exploring the "dynamics of subjugation" and "vulnerabilities of experience" in curriculum in relation with people's lives, Britzman proposes, possibly, means "more critical ways [of] addressing the uneasy relationship between structures of feeling and structures of institutions" (p.257-258).

Thinking about curriculum as lived alongside my memories of Mrs. Jay, I can see she was far more complex than an adult who chose to stand nearby and watch a fight unfold between me and my classmate. Her love of literature influenced my own budding independent reading and story writing. I wonder if Mrs. Jay like Huber (1999) also felt the tension of living “between these planned curriculum experiences and the stories [she] saw some of the children living out within [the] classroom context” (p.13).

Understanding curriculum as a process that is lived situated within particular classroom contexts is a fitting portrayal for the intricacy of North America’s school landscapes. Chambers’ (2003) defines this complexity in Canada in relation with its topography. She writes Canada is “a vast territory with many regions, innumerable groups (with different traditions), and relentless (and competing) stories in a seemingly infinite number of languages”, a situation, she suggests, which exemplifies the “challenges that face curriculum and curriculum scholarship in Canada today” (p.221). Chamber’s point helps me to consider the uniqueness of Canadian school landscapes, contexts shaped by the particularities of individuals as they negotiate their lives within a curriculum of lives.

Growing Wakeful to Diversity[28] *in Curriculum Making*[29]

Reflecting upon my memories as a student in Canada alongside my experiences as a teacher in Turkey led me to consider the ways school landscapes and curriculum making shape and are shaped by individuals' identities. North America's increasingly changing school landscapes has sparked debate and research upon teacher education in diversity and curriculum. This took me to literature which considers curriculum making in classrooms shaped by diversity as something that entails ongoing negotiations between teachers and children.

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[28] My use of the word diversity is done so cautiously. I emphasize this as I am aware the term diversity is often used to purport another category for individuals of visible minority heritage. My use of the word “diversity” is my attempt to convey the multiplicity of individuals’ lives, their experiences, relationships, and personal landscapes, alongside the presence of ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity across and within school contexts.

[29] There is a growing literature on teacher education in diversity in North American curriculum. My discussion here is meant to highlight scholarly works which particularly informed my thinking about classroom curriculum making situated within diverse school contexts. This being said I acknowledge the works around culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000), culturally relevant teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1995), and culturally responsive education (Nieto, 1999) as significant to my understanding of curriculum as living in relation with individuals’ lives, their backgrounds, expectations, experiences, and relationships. Further contributing to my awareness is research and discussion upon teacher education in diversity in math (Downey & Cobbs, 2007), language arts (Boyd, Arail, Williams, Jocson, K., Sachs, G.T., McNeal, K. Fecho, B., Fisher, M., Healy, M.K., Meyer, T., & Morrell, E., 2006; Murray Orr, 2005); preservice teacher education (Carson & Johnston, 2003; Desrochers, 2006; Johnston, 2006; Sleeter, 2001), science (Gaskell, 2003; Jegede & Aikenhead, 1999), social studies (Salinas, 2006), and physical education (Hastie, Martin, & Buchanan, 2006). These scholars and their work enrich my understanding. They help me to see, and to distinguish, my thinking about classroom curriculum making as something lived, made, negotiated, and, possibly, tension-filled. Classroom curriculum making is a dynamic process encompassing a multiplicity of individuals, teachers, children, families, administrators, as their lives intersect on school landscapes situated within a milieu shaped by dominant cultural, social and political narratives.

As children live on school landscapes, their stories to live by are shaped by the people and policies they, knowingly and unknowingly, interact with (Clandinin et al., 2006; Murphy, 2004). There is much literature to be found substantiating the identity shaping process occurring in schools and the curriculum making complexity this entails for children and teachers situated within diverse classroom landscapes (Brock, Wallace, Herschbach, Johnson, Raikes, Warren, Nikoli, & Holland, 2006; Chang & Rosiek, 2003; Chan, 2006).

Chang and Rosiek (2003) describe Chang's tensions as a Hmong teacher teaching science and its Western assumptions to a classroom of Hmong students. The authors explore the challenges Chang faced as a teacher teaching a mandated science curriculum which endorsed ideas that conflicted with the cultural beliefs of the students he taught, beliefs which they also expected Chang, their teacher, to uphold. Chan (2006) explores the curriculum making complexities of two teachers as they attempt to implement a curricular event, a field trip, while also acknowledging the diversity of their students' lives. Chan suggests attending to "diversity can be a challenge" (p.172). Because Canadian schools are sites of "receiving cultures of immigrants" (p.173), Chan proposes, school communities are responsible for an ongoing, reciprocal negotiation of culture. American researchers, Brock et al. (2006), undertaking an inquiry exploring their learning about literacy for children from diverse backgrounds, reconsider their understanding of who they are as teachers. In response to their experiences in Costa Rica, Brock et al. inquired into their own understandings about teaching children with backgrounds, culturally and linguistically, different than their own. Being physically displaced, they suggest, allowed them to reexamine previous teaching experiences alongside children of diverse backgrounds, an opportunity which allowed them to foster new understandings of themselves in relation with the children they taught.

Reflecting upon the experiences described by these scholars signifies to me the underlying complexity of teaching in and preparing teachers for the diverse landscapes of North American classrooms. Their work deepens my understanding of classroom curriculum making as unique to particular contexts. I was also attentive to the tensions each of the researchers and teachers experienced as they attempted to negotiate curriculum that acknowledged who they were and who the children were in relation with each other.

Tension and the ways it may emerge within curriculum making and its negotiations moves me to consider research situated within diverse school landscapes (Clandinin et al., 2006; Elbaz-Luwisch 2004; Huber, Murphy & Clandinin, 2003). As Clandinin et al. (2006) attended to the lives of teachers, children, and families as they negotiated curriculum, they found these negotiations were marked by tensions as teachers' and children's stories to live by bumped against others' stories to live by and their school landscapes. Elbaz-Luwisch (2004), drawing upon her experiences as a teacher educator in Israel, explores her attempts to understand what could be learned in a society shaped by conflict. Through dialogue between Jewish and Arab/Palestinian

Israelis with varying years of teaching experience, she explains, she learned to "listen to her own body as a teacher educator" and became aware of "the discourse of Western culture" concentrated upon "seeking to eliminate violence, to resolve conflict, to eradicate suffering" as opposed to exploring the "deeper understandings of both the circumstances and their underlying meanings" (p. 21). The dialogue of curriculum making, she suggests, is about finding "ways of allowing bodies—live bodies—to enter that in-between space where education can take place" (p. 21). Huber, Murphy, and Clandinin (2003) inquiring into the ways curriculum might be negotiated in terms of physical space explored a particular curriculum space, peace candle gatherings, and attended to moments as lives bumped. Staying with the tension of this curriculum space showed them "the complexity of attempting to negotiate a curriculum of diversity" and that to do so "required liminal spaces" and attending to tension as a way to engage children's "cultural imagination" (p. 359).

Thinking about the ways tension is integral to classroom curriculum making informed my understanding as I lived alongside the children and Song at Streamside School. Being attentive to the tensions I saw the children as experiencing, as they negotiated curriculum in relation with others, made me think about the importance of particular tension-filled moments and what these possibly meant to who the children were and who they were becoming.

Growing Wakeful to Moving Ahead

Inquiring into my storied experiences of school awoke me to classroom curriculum making as challenging and complex. As I came to articulate my experiences and interests in ways that also spoke to a wider community of research, I was able to consider how my understanding might inform my study. While with Song and the children in the classroom, I was able to observe the ways they negotiated curriculum in relation with each other. Throughout the school year the classroom's curriculum making made me attentive to Owen, Dana, and Lilly and if their experiences would shape the children's stories about their lives in school. In the following chapter I discuss my methodology and the ways I lived alongside Song and the children at Streamside School.

Chapter Three

Narrative Inquiry: A Way of Inquiring Narratively and Relationally

> This telling of ourselves, this meeting of ourselves in the past through inquiry, makes clear that as inquirers we, too, are part of the parade. We have helped make the world in which we find ourselves. We are not merely objective inquirers, people on the high road, who study a world lesser in quality than our moral temperament would have it, people who study a world we did not help create. On the contrary, we are complicit in the world we study, we need to remake ourselves as well as offer up research understandings that could lead to a better life. (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.61)

Prior to entering Song's classroom, inquiring into my own experiences allowed me to better understand how I was a complicit part of my study. I knew that while my focus would shift to Song and the children once I entered the classroom, my observations and unfolding understanding were also connected to my experiences. Narrative inquiry "as both phenomena under study and a method of study" (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.4) is an undertaking infused with complex responsibility. Being wakeful and attentive are significant to narrative inquiry. Who I am and the ways this shapes my world view were all in relation to the phenomena under study.

To attend to the world as a narrative inquirer I think of the world as "stories lived and told" (Clandinin and Connelly, p.20). The living and telling of stories is part of an ongoing relationally involved process among people. Contexts, experiences and relationships within contexts, and their understandings are expressed by individuals narratively. Adding further complexity to the temporal-contextual-relational nature of narrative inquiry is the understanding that it is composed of multiple moments occurring over time. For example, these aspects within my own inquiry are emphasized in how the study began and ended in the midst of Song's, the children's, and the children's families' lives. Beginning in September 2006 and continuing until March 2008, their lived experiences and the multiple landscapes which informed them, in turn, resonated with the knowing I have from the contexts and people in my life.

Despite the years I have lived abroad, there are still moments when I desire to understand who I am, according to the ways I once assumed my life would be, that was a life lived primarily in a Canadian setting. It is moments like these that characterize the difficulty of living in multiple contexts. Yet, life has provided me with opportunities to think about how I understand myself and others in ways I might not have experienced had I stayed in Canada. These experiences informed me as I lived alongside the children in the inquiry, Owen, Dana, Lilly, their teacher, Song, and their families.

Coles (1989) suggests that people tell their stories in ways they "hope" are "well enough so that we understand the truth of their lives" while they also "hope we know how to interpret their stories correctly" (p.7). These words remind me of my time at Streamside Elementary School and during conversational moments with the children, their families, and Song as they told stories which were sometimes situated in other landscapes. Their stories were, at times, complex and made me realize how challenging it is to convey to others experiences which have occurred in other places. This is particularly so if the stories being told are of experiences, places, and people far removed from your own. It seems to me this creates a relational challenge for both the teller of the story and the receiver as they both strive to understand the other through the story being told.

Entering into the Field

As I entered into the classroom at Streamside Elementary School in September, 2006, I did so knowing that the initial weeks and months were crucial in how relationships would unfold. The school and Song's classroom were unknown contexts and, despite the warm welcome I received, I found myself initially moving cautiously upon the classroom landscape. Because I arrived three weeks after the school year had begun, I was walking into a classroom that had routines in place.

One of these routines was an activity known as "star of the week". On a scheduled basis each week throughout the school year, one of the children in Song's classroom was the week's designated "star". The activity not only shaped my time spent in the classroom, it also helped me to become acquainted with the children in particular ways. On Monday afternoons, the "star" was introduced to the class and an interview was conducted. The child's classmates asked questions about her/his birth date, family members, hobbies, favorite foods and television programs, career choice, and extra curricular lessons. The answers the child gave were recorded by Song on a large piece of chart paper. This paper was then posted on a bulletin board near the entrance of the classroom where it would stay for the remainder of that week. If the child had brought in photographs these too were shared and posted along with the interview answers. On Wednesday afternoons the child would share personal items brought in an "all-about-me box". During this time the child would share these items and their stories with the class. Questions about what the child had brought would follow. In addition to these scheduled events, the star of the week also had the privilege of leading the class to other rooms in the building as well as choosing the order of the children, who sat in groups, to come to the sharing area[30] of the classroom.

I was also present while the children created their all-about-me folders in late September and October, 2006. These folders were used to store an assortment of the children's work including art work and/or writing at varying stages of completion. On the covers of the all-about-me folders, the children created personal collages about themselves. These collages often included photographs, images from magazines of video games, animals, food, favorite sports teams, and/or movies, as well as stickers. In some ways because I was entering the classroom after the school year had begun, I felt one step behind what had already happened in the room. These folders, like the star of the week activity, gave me a way of getting to know the children.

My plan during this tentative time, as I grew to know Song and the children, was to be an active part in the classroom's daily activities and, from this involvement, to allow our relationships to grow. This was unknown territory for me as I was accustomed to being an active part of the school communities in which I had previously attended and taught.

My personal practical knowledge composed both in Canada and in Turkey is a compilation of experiences in which I coached athletic teams, directed plays and poetry clubs, and facilitated service learning projects. Being an active contributor to my former schools was how I developed many of my relationships and, as such, I relied upon what I knew to direct me during those early months in Song's classroom. I knew the relationships I was entering into were not ones to be rushed and that it was best to allow time, classroom participation, and attentiveness to shape our beginnings. The only way I knew how to convey to the children and to Song that I was listening and that I was someone with whom they might share their stories was to be active in the classroom, to be attentive to their experiences and concerns, and to allow time to do the rest.

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[30] The sharing area was a matted area located in front of Song's desk near the classroom's large picture window. Here the children and Song often had class discussions, read aloud books, and took part in impromptu show and tells based on items the children occasionally brought in.

Dana, Lilly, and Owen were all students in Song's classroom. Of the three children only Lilly had attended Streamside since Kindergarten. Each of the children was of different cultural heritage and whose families had been in Canada for varying degrees of time. With the exception of Owen who was born in Canada, Lilly and Dana were both born in the United States. In the upcoming chapters further details about the children's backgrounds will be shared.

Epistemological and Ontological Considerations Underlying the Inquiry

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) assert human thought is fundamentally metaphorical and, as such, it is present in life's daily routines and human conceptual understandings as evident in expressed language. Their argument allows me to ponder the significance of how I, an individual who grew up and taught in Canada and later in Turkey, physically view and understand the world as suggested by the metaphorical interpretations I imbue life with. Elbow (1986) suggests my construction of perception relies upon what I have previously learned. This is a notion which has caused me to wonder about the ways I perceive others and how my construction of them is largely based upon previous experiential and relational understanding. Aoki (1993) proposes that how I presently understand the world can be partially attributed to education and to what he refers to as the "curriculum topography" (p.256) of traditional schooling in which knowledge is understood as distinct subjects separate from one another, and what he posits gives a tangible shape to Western epistemological beliefs. It is also interesting to note that what Lakoff and Johnson refer to as "instincts", what Elbow refers to as "construction of perception", and what Aoki refers to as "curriculum topography", indeed, arguably, acknowledge one and the same thing, the human tendency to box knowledge into small frames of recognition; thus, potentially disengaging a person from other ways of knowing and believing. This final point, in relation to the inquiry, was something I often speculated upon, wondering what I might possibly be missing or misinterpreting based upon the cultural differences and backgrounds which shaped me, the children, their families, and Song.

Greene (1995) and her suggestion that human imagination allows the cognitive consideration of "alternative realties" encouraged me to question and imagine beyond my personal frames of reference, something which she refers to as an act of breaking with the "familiar distinctions and definitions" that shape lives (p.3). I also found Andrew's (2007) notion of narrative imagination particularly helpful in this respect. Andrews suggests "narrative imagination…lies at the heart of cross-cultural research" because "if we wish to access the frameworks of meaning for others, we must be willing and able to imagine a world other than the one we know" (p.489). Greene's and Andrew's emphasis upon imagination in relation with my understanding of myself as a narrative inquirer allowed me to be attentive to and wonder about what I observed, heard, and discussed. What was also particularly helpful was reflecting upon the narrative beginnings I wrote as part of my preparations for candidacy and for my doctoral proposal prior to entering the classroom at Streamside School. Inquiring into these storied experiences allowed me the opportunity to explore the prescribed directives embedded within my own life. This was something which I believe helped me to remain open to other ways of knowing and to collaborate with the children, their families, and Song.

Throughout the school year as my wonders accumulated in my journal and lay alongside my other field texts, I found myself questioning the ways I was making meaning of past moments. The opportunity to truly slow down and wonder in my writing, however, did not occur until my time in the field was complete in May, 2007. Wondering and asking questions alongside the written interim research texts allowed me to think about other possibilities and ways of interpreting the children's lives. I attempted to actualize my narrative imagination (Andrews, 2007) within the narrative accounts about each of the children. My wonders were positioned as questions alongside my interpretations of the children's stories to live by. Pinnegar (2006), commenting upon Clandinin et al.'s (2006) work and their use of wondering within their research and research texts, writes:

> Wondering engages the reader in uncovering and discovering research findings leading the reader to imagine alternatives about what was and think more complexly about what is and what might be. Wonderings invite and enable readers to reimagine the story being lived, connect the story to their own lived experience in schools or as researchers, and rethink research, schools, and lives. (p. 179)

Pinnegar draws my attention to the importance of imagining alternatives during the composition of research texts. From her explanation I understand that wondering is a continual part of the narrative writing process. The result of writing in this manner is a text that is not fixed, a piece of writing which invites readers to engage with the text and wonder anew about the author's interpretation of the person represented.

Becoming a Part of the Classroom and its Routines

Informed by this theoretical background and my understanding of the relational inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly, 1996; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, 1999; Huber, 1999) I was entering into, my primary premise, the day I arrived in the classroom was to begin building relationships with Song and the children. This was a plan which relied upon improvisation, participation, and time. So focused upon this was I, that I did not take into consideration the time I also would need to become familiar again with a Canadian classroom. The day I entered Streamside[31] was the first time I had been in a Canadian school in 8 years. Further complicating this was that the majority of my teaching experience is more firmly located within secondary teaching. While I initially looked upon this as an aspect that might put me at a disadvantage, over time I began to see it as something which encouraged me to stay wakeful and attentive (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Attending to classroom curriculum making and the ways the children negotiated their identities in a curriculum of lives, involved being attentive to the children's daily interactions in the classroom and to stories of their experiences at home and in school.

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[31] A reminder for the reader: My inquiry was situated in a grade 3 classroom as it was part of the larger SSHRC study funding the research.

Particular attention was also given to the children's current relationships and previous experiences as well as relationships in other contexts.

From September of 2006 to May, 2007, I was in Song's classroom three afternoons a week, usually on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. From September 2006 to June, 2007, Jean Clandinin was in the classroom one afternoon a week, usually on Wednesdays. My life in the classroom was busy and there was little time to write field notes once I entered the room, leaving the majority of my field note writing to occur in the evenings. On occasion, during whole class discussions, I, as well as Song, took notes and/or audio recorded what the children were sharing as a way to recall the conversation's particularities. However these types of moments did not occur regularly until the spring, as during the fall I was more focused upon becoming accustomed to the classroom's daily routines.

Life was busy in the classroom. On any typical afternoon throughout the year I could be found answering children's questions while they worked individually or in groups, photocopying handouts, walking about the playground at break times, or occasionally leading the class through a series of games or skills during their physical education lesson. In addition to the busyness of the daily schedule, I also found myself growing more attentive to Song and the children as I listened to their stories and in response shared my own while we worked and played.

Alongside the relationships I had entered into was my growing familiarity with the day to day routines of the classroom: its activities, scheduled timetable, and the subjects taught on the afternoons I was present. During the period of time leading up until the winter break at the end of December, I mostly observed and participated in activities in conjunction with the subject areas of math, science, social studies, and physical education. Present throughout the school and in the classroom was a curricular expectation focusing upon the development of inquiry based skills. Emerging from this curricular expectation were activities which encouraged the children to be curious, reflective and critical in their thinking.

Of particular interest for me were the subject area of social studies and its units of study within four specific countries: Peru, India, Tunisia, and the Ukraine. As grade 3 is a provincial achievement testing year, initially, I was more curious about English language arts and mathematics, the subjects to be tested. What caused me to become more attentive to social studies, however, was the nature of the conversations occurring in the classroom throughout the fall in connection to the countries of Peru and India. In these conversations, the children shared not only their own wonders and questions, but also these conversations allowed them to reflect upon their experiences and share them with their classmates.

Curricular Shifts and Considerations

Midway through the year, it seemed to me a shift occurred in the way the afternoons were structured. This coincided with Song's interest in creating for the children opportunities in which they could share and reflect upon their lived experiences. Over time Song's ideas evolved into a focus around belonging: what it meant to belong and with whom and where the children felt they belonged. Belonging was an important part of Song's stories to live by.

In July 2006 as part of her graduate studies, Song took a course about curriculum and community building. This course seemed to have meant a great deal to Song for she periodically referred to it throughout the school year and the activities that she felt had generated meaning making, particularly its intensive writing, response groups and written response. Along with these activities was a creative final project which focused upon their interpretations of community and curriculum building. For this project, Song created an album that contained photographs visually symbolizing her interpretation of community. Drawing upon her experiences in this course, Song seemed anxious to try these activities out in her own classroom while making them her own by focusing upon belonging.

Song discussed this idea with Jean Clandinin and me and soon it filtered into our conversations, informal and recorded, as we discussed its possibilities, watched it unfold, and wondered about where it might take us next. In mid December, 2006, Song initially began this process by having the children compose annals[32] (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) about the important events in their own lives. Referring to the annals as time/lifelines, Song encouraged the class to think about the events, people, and places which were meaningful to them. On this same day the children also chose their own sharing groups. Each group consisted of 3-4 children and remained consistent for the remainder of the school year. One week later the children returned to their time/lifelines and added new details. On this particular day within their sharing groups the children discussed their time/lifelines and, in turn, each member of the group responded with comments and/or questions about what their classmate had shared.

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[32] The writing of annals refers to Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) methodological tool of creating "annals and chronicles" as a way for research participants to recall their previous experiences and "to construct the outlines of a personal narrative" (p.112). Annals are considered to be like a "list of dates, memories, events, stories" whereas chronicles are understood to be "the sequence of events in and around a particular topic or narrative thread of interest" (p.112).

In February, 2007, on Valentine's Day, Song returned to the idea of belonging. As part of the Valentine's Day celebrations, Song asked the children to write a paragraph about belonging and what it meant for each of them. That afternoon as part of the day's festivities, the children, in their sharing groups, created brief skits about belonging and performed them in front of the class.

From these beginnings, and following Song's lead, Jean Clandinin and I watched and participated as her idea developed into a project around the lives of the children and with whom and where they belonged in and outside of school. This project was named the citizenship education project and, beginning in late February and throughout March, 2007, the project was organized around photography tasks. There were four photography tasks: photographs of people with whom I belong (February 21-28); photographs of places I belong outside of school (February 28-March7); photographs of places I belong in school (March 7-14); photographs that symbolize belonging to me (March 14-21). Based upon a week's particular photography task, each Wednesday[33] afternoon the children would reflect upon the photographs they had taken. These reflections took some time as the children wrote 2-3 sentences and drew pictures[34] about each photo. Once their reflective writing and drawings were complete, the children would then share these with their sharing groups. In order to keep the children's weekly reflections organized,

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[33] Song, Jean Clandinin, and I felt that a Wednesday to Wednesday schedule would allow the children plenty of time to concentrate upon each week's different photography task. This schedule also allowed for all of us to be present in the room while the children wrote about and discussed the photographs in their sharing groups.

[34] It was decided that because the majority of the children were using disposable cameras and that each photography task was composed of 5 photos, it made sense in terms of time and cost efficiency not to have the children develop their film on a weekly basis. The children did not have their films developed until all of their photographs had been taken.

Song created citizenship education folders for this purpose. In these, the children's writing and drawings were kept.

Soon after we began this Wednesday afternoon endeavor, Song commented to Jean Clandinin and me that the children did not seem to be thinking deeply enough about their photographs while writing. Her comment led us to thinking about Murray-Orr's (2005) narrative inquiry work with children and book conversations, something that led us to choose picture books which we thought would help the children discuss belonging in relation with the story and themselves. The books read, discussed, and revisited between the months of March and June, 2007, were *All the Places to Love* (MacLachlan & Wimmer, 1999), *Friends of a Feather: One of Life's Little Fables* (Cosby & Cosby, 2003), *Just Kidding* (Ludwig, 2006), *Tea with Milk* (Say, 1999), *The Lotus Seed* (Garland, 2001), *The Name Jar* (Choi, 2003), *The Salamander Room* (Mazer, 1994), and *What you Know First* (MacLachlan & Moser, 1995).

Song's focus on making books a part of the project resulted in Wednesday afternoons soon evolving into beginning with reading a book aloud. This was followed by a whole class conversation about the story and its connection to belonging. The children would then write reflectively about their photographs and discuss them with their sharing groups. When time allowed, a larger class discussion about their photographs occurred. These activities generally took us until midway in the afternoon[35], after which, the children would attend physical education and music class.

By the third week of March the photograph tasks were completed and the children had in their possession approximately 20-25 photographs along with their reflective

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[18] Alongside the project on Wednesday afternoons, other subject matter lessons continued to be taught. Science and math were still on an ongoing part of the afternoon schedule on Wednesdays.

writing that they had discussed with their sharing groups. At the end of March, during the one week holiday break, the children had their films developed. Throughout the month of April the children, using these photographs and their reflective writing about each photo, created a poster size collage about themselves. Upon completion of their collages, the children individually presented their posters to their classmates. In response to the children's collages their peers wrote reflective comments about the presentations they had shared. When time allowed, Song had the children share their comments with the presenter. This often sparked further discussion with the children. This was something Song encouraged and she often directed the discussion back to the child presenter to allow them the opportunity to respond to their classmates' commentary. Due to the length of time it took for each presentation and its accompanying response process, the presentations of the children's collages began at the end of April and continued until the latter part of June, 2007.

In addition to these presentations, the children also had the opportunity to share something further on the last day of school in June. Individually and in groups they presented traditions particular to their families. This was not an isolated event as the children, throughout the year, in conversation with Song and with their sharing groups emphasized their interest in sharing their traditions as well as learning about each others' family practices. In response to the picture book *Tea with Milk* (Say, 1999) Song led a discussion about what the children did at home that might be different than their peers. This led to a conversation about traditions: what the children ate and what they celebrated (Field notes, March 8, 2007). A second example was when Dana presented her citizenship education poster in May. After her presentation her classmates, in their written responses as well as in the ensuing discussion, spoke of how Dana's presentation reminded them of the traditions her family has (Field notes, May 7, 2007). Later in the month of May Song guided the class in a discussion about family traditions and asked the children to think about the different things this might entail. The children suggested things which they routinely did with their families like playing scrabble and other board games during holidays (Field notes, May 23, 2007). As these examples emphasize, the topic of traditions emerged from the children's conversations. Song, in order to honor this interest of the children, organized an event on the second last day of school in June so that the children would be able to share their traditions in a celebratory way.

The Practicalities of Generating Multiple Field Texts

Attending to the lives of Lilly, Owen, and Dana in relation with their families, their peers, and Song involved a variety of field texts to be developed due to the multiperspectival nature of the inquiry. During the fall 2006, I wrote field notes about my time spent in school familiarizing myself with Song, the children, and the routines of the classroom while I also attempted to be attentive to which children might be interested in participating within the inquiry. After the holiday break in December, 2006, my field notes became more focused upon the actions of Dana, Lilly, and Owen, their participation in classroom activities, their interaction with other members of the school community in and outside of the classroom as well as upon our lunchtime recorded conversations throughout the months of February, March, and April, 2007.

In October, 2006, Jean Clandinin, Song, and I began to have recorded research conversations; these conversations continued throughout the year until June of 2007. In addition to negotiating relationships with Song and the children I also had the task of negotiating relationships with the families of the children. Prior to the holiday break at the end of December, Dana's, Lilly's, and Owen's families were invited to participate in the inquiry. Song was an integral part of this process as she made the initial phone call to each of the families and inquired if they might be interested in becoming a part of the study I was undertaking. Based upon the conversations we had, transcript copies were later shared with Song, Dana, Lilly, and Owen, and the children's families.

Because I wanted to narratively inquire into the children's experiences in school, at home, and their movement between these two landscapes, it was important that I was a part of the children's school context, as well as able to visit their families in their homes. Based upon what I was observing in the classroom, I often asked the children questions around moments in school and documents generated from classroom activities like the photographs from the citizenship education project. In addition to the photographs from this project, were also artifacts created by the children during their time in the classroom in connection to ongoing school work. These included a time/lifeline, an all about me folder, and a piece of their writing about belonging.

I wrote in my journal on a regular basis as a way of remaining aware of and awake to the numerous events unfolding in the classroom and during conversations outside of the classroom context. Once my time in the classroom concluded in May, 2007, I began the task of reading and rereading all of the field texts. My journal in this aspect proved to be helpful because it often referred to events and moments with the children that had taken place throughout the school year and my unfolding understanding of them. Once I began writing the actual research texts, my journal was also a valuable part in this process as it allowed me make connections to the day's previous drafts. I also looked upon my journal as something which I carried with me on my travels between Edmonton, the Maritimes, and Turkey. It helped me remain situated in the classroom and the children's lives when I was periodically not with them.

As the research conversations with the children progressed, I also found myself wondering if the children and I could create an identity artifact that related individually to them and their particular interests. Drawing upon earlier narrative inquiry work in which researchers wrote fictional stories about the child participants they had worked with as a another way to understand the children (Murphy, 2004; Murray-Orr, 2005), made me consider this type of identity generating activity as a possibility to pursue. Based upon what I had learned about each of the children over the course of the year and from our initial lunchtime conversations, I individually suggested to them the making of a different identity artifact that I thought might appeal to them. The making of these pieces along with the composition of their citizenship education project became the focus of our latter conversations, which, in turn, informed the research texts I wrote in varying ways. In short, Owen and I together wrote a fictional story about him that was based upon his ability to read. Dana's identity artifact was a remaking of her all about me folder, a folder that she had first constructed in class at the beginning of the school year. Based upon Lilly's love of drawing, my original thought was that she might like to draw an-all-about-Lilly drawing. This particular identity artifact took an interesting turn as detailed in the chapter about Lilly, as Lilly decided it should be a drawing about Lilly and me.

The 6 recorded and/or field noted conversations I had with Song and Jean Clandinin were also moments in which I was able to ask questions and discuss the children and situations which arose in school. Once the citizenship education project became a part of the classroom's ongoing routine, it too became a part of our conversations. Conversations with Song about her and the children's school experiences offered another perspective upon the children in school.

Along with the conversations I had with Song were the conversations I had with each of the families. These began in December of 2006 and carried on until April of 2007. During this period of time I spoke with each of the families 3-4 times. While I was visiting Lilly's and Dana's homes, Lilly and Dana often joined the conversations adding details to the comments made or asking questions about where they had been when a particular event was referred to. Conversations with each of the families revolved around their reasons/motivation for moving to Canada, their own school experiences in their home countries, as well as their impressions of Streamside School and the assessment system in place in relation with their own learning and school assessment experiences.

Although I had a general idea in mind and questions for each of the conversations I had with Song, the children, and the children's families, I attempted to keep our talks informal in nature as I was not comfortable with an interview bounded by specific questions. Over time as we grew to know one another, the families often had questions for me about why I had moved to Turkey and my experiences living there. These questions seemed to extend and deepen our conversations as we collectively shared and reflected upon past experiences.

In the fall of 2007 throughout the month of September and mid way through October, I returned to the families' homes to share the interim research texts I had written in the spring and summer. Interim research texts were also shared with Song in the summer and fall via e-mail correspondence. Due to the length of each account, negotiations with the families were spread out over 2 visits as I wanted the children and families to feel that they had adequate time to think and ask questions about the writing I was sharing. I felt the break in between each visit was important as a way to encourage reflection and possible questions on their part. During these visits, Dana and Lilly were present each time while Owen was only present for the latter half of my first visit. In March 2008 I returned to share with the families the latest version of writing. It was also a time in which I was able to share with all of the children and Owen specifically in more detail.

During the meeting with the families in September and October 2007, and March 2008, while I shared the interim research texts, I attempted to slow down and point out to them the way I was writing and, in particular, what I was concentrating upon. This included talking openly about the tensions I had noted during classroom curriculum making. Talking about the tensions in the texts was a conscious decision on my part as I felt they might not have been familiar with engaging with these types of research texts. Explaining what I had understood as tensions often took time. I felt the need to explain why I felt each selected moment was tension-filled and where this had led me while analyzing and writing about the children's lives. To put it simply, talking about tensions and dwelling in them was tension-filled. I knew that I wanted the families to be aware of what I had written; yet, I also knew that this did not necessarily mean they would feel comfortable with my interpretations or would want it to appear in the text as it did. At times I was faced with challenging questions, questions which caused me to go back to the text I had written and explain what I had noted in a back and forth manner over time.

Explaining my interpretations in the temporally-layered manner that I did, seemed to encourage understanding and discussion between us. At other times, I was told that they trusted me and that there was no need to share what I had written. In response to these moments, I often referred methodologically to the relational work I understood this to be and, as such, it was imperative that I share my writing.

Each of the families received drafts of the interim research texts, the narrative account, of their child. Field notes were also made about our conversations as way to remind me of the points we had discussed and negotiated upon. As a result of these meetings, changes were made and some of their responses were added to the interim research texts as noted in the chapters in which they appear.

The Three-Dimensional Narrative Inquiry Space: Considerations and Challenges

The intricacy of attending to multiple lives in an ongoing manner (Clandinin et al., 2006) while living in the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space was one of my greatest challenges throughout the year I was in the classroom. As my time at Streamside School waned and as my departure date to Ankara approached, this concern of mine was soon challenged by a new contender, the composition of research texts. Imagining how I was to compose research texts that represented each of the children in relation with their families and school experiences, experiences which included their relationship with Song, became something I began to think more contemplatively about in the spring and later more intensively as I wrote throughout the summer and early fall of 2007.

As I attended to the multiplicity of Dana's, Owen's, and Lilly's lives, my thinking was guided in an ongoing manner by a three-dimensional metaphorical narrative inquiry space composed of temporality, the personal and social, and place (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.50). The guidelines which directed me within this space are what Clandinin and Connelly define as the "*backward* and *forward*" direction of "temporality—past, present, and future (continuity)", the "*inward* [direction] such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions", and the "*outward* [direction] toward the existential conditions, that is, the environment" (italics in the original, p.50). The three-dimensional metaphorical space and the four directions enabled me to conceptualize a space in which individually and relationally my lived experiences and wonders lived alongside my interpretations of the children's lived experiences along with the collaborative help of the children, Song, and the children's families. The retelling of my own story, as demonstrated in the preceding chapters, was my effort to not only reveal how my interest in this study emerged, but to also show how I inquired into my own experiences using the three-dimensional inquiry space. To tell a story and to retell a story in narrative inquiry research is an imperative distinction. It is in the retelling of stories that the inquiry unfolds. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) write the retelling is the "more difficult but important task" as it "is the retelling of stories that allow for growth and change" (p.71).

As a way to think about the temporal mobility of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space and how it may be considered, I offer as an example a memory of a photograph. This picture was taken the night before I was to fly to Turkey on August 15, 1998. The photograph marks a difficult goodbye for me and my family as well as a state of transition for us all. This photograph visually helps me to conceptualize the three-dimensional metaphorical space whereas the four directions guide me in how I may attend to it. As part of my attempts to understand the intricacy of this photographed moment, I cannot attend to it temporally without also relating to this instant personally and socially and locating it in the place in which it was taken. The complexity of attending, however, is further layered when I consider that the photograph is one moment within a continuum of people's lived experiences, life experiences lived beyond the edges of the photo's frame. These are people with whom I am in relationship and people who have different understandings of this photographed moment, what was occurring, and how our lives leading up to it and leading away from it were lived. Although I physically left this landscape, I did not emotionally, relationally, or morally leave it. This landscape, as captured in the photograph, served in many ways as a metaphorical keepsake of a context which lives within me. It also served as a reminder of Lilly's, Dana's and Owen's lives, their lived experiences, their relational knowledge, and the multiple contexts which live within each of them.

While writing the narrative accounts about each of the children, I thought of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space as an intersected space. Within this intersection I moved backwards and forwards and inwards and outwards in relation with the children, their families, and their school experiences while being attentive to their relationship with Song. Thinking about the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space as temporally mobile was helpful. It allowed me to flatten out periods of time in between moments I had observed in the classroom or stories I had in conversations with the children, their families, and Song. My analysis of the field texts began in places of tension as I considered memorable moments I had lived with each of the children in the classroom and during conversations. Sometimes these tension-filled moments were striking while at other times they were attached to a particular object or more subtly running throughout the school year. Beginning with tension allowed me to then move resonantly outwards over time to other moments and conversations as I considered Song and the children's families in relation with the multiple threads[36] composing the children's stories to live by. By picturing positioned moments as pointing towards the first of the narrative threads informing the children's stories to live by, I was able to visualize the continuities[37] and connections they had to their families, their peers, their experiences in school and to Song. This process, however, was not chronological and I found myself temporally going back and forth, layering my understanding as it occurred over time, in order to allow a more detailed account to emerge. This back and forth rhythm was also accompanied by moving inwardly and outwardly as I considered myself temporally in that moment as well as the people, events, and environment in which I was situated.

While folding time and laying these moments alongside one another drew me back to Lilly, Owen, and Dana and the tellings and retellings they expressed about their lived experiences, I was also mindful of Song and the children's families. Even as I approached this study with an understanding that it was to be multiperspectival (Clandinin et al., 2006) and remained cognizant of it during the composing, and later the analysis, of field texts, writing in this manner proved to be challenging making me wonder how to write and represent multiperspectivally from an inquiry space that was three-dimensional.

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[36] I understand the notion of threads as a narrative term and I use it to convey the multiplicity of people's identities, their stories to live by, in relation with their lived experiences, relationships, and contexts.

[37] Although my emphasis is upon continuities, I am aware that discontinuities may also occur in individuals' stories to live by. Research has shown the ways in which standardization of curricula and achievement can conflict with or disrupt cultural and family knowledge (Clandinin et al., 2006; Greene, 1993; Huber, 2008).

Relational Underpinnings Informing the Multiple Back, Middle, and Foregrounds of My Research Texts

Throughout the process of writing the children's narrative accounts, I was conscious that they are in the forefront of each narrative account. In addition to the children, I was conscious that I had entered into relationships with the children's families and with Song, individuals with their own stories to tell. Because I felt a responsibility to honor all of them in the work, it was important to me that Song's and the families' voices in relation with the children's were heard as were the children's stories in relation with theirs. This, at times, proved to be complicated while it also made me consider how the relationships, their unique unfoldings, in turn shaped the ways in which my writing emerged and took hold. Schulz's (1996) thoughts upon fidelity provide me with some insight into how my writing about the children occurred in the ways that it did. Schulz explains that the underlying component of the research relationship is fidelity and as such it encourages relationships to strengthen over time in conjunction with commitment, trust, care, co-reflection, and dialogue. Prior to entering into research relationships I understood Schulz's notion as well as Noddings's (1984) principles of care, as extending to an ethic of respect and confidentiality. For example, I imagined that there might have been moments in which I was privy to a story of a highly personal nature, and the participant involved might have encouraged me to share this story to a wider audience putting them in a position of risk.

While I still imagine the above scenario to be a possibility, I am also aware that this interpretation only touches upon what Schulz was referring to. Fidelity as a notion is something I now construe as a constancy of caring intent; an intent the researcher bears, its caring constancy emerging as the relationship unfolds. Part of my understanding of fidelity also extends to the research texts which were written. During the process of writing interim research texts, the narrative accounts about the children, these pages were taken back to them, the families, and Song in September and October 2007 and again in March 2008 as a way to ensure that what I wrote was indeed respectful and honoring.

As I entered into each relationship I was mindful that I was doing so tentatively without a plan and that I was in a situation which called upon me to be wakeful, attentive (Clandinin et al., 2006), and, at times, vulnerable in my hopefulness. In turn, I believe it was the relationships I had with Owen's, Dana's, and Lilly's families and Song, relationships underlying and informing my understanding of the children, which made this a unique experience for me.

At the beginning of my doctoral study, although I have experience living and teaching in a context different than my own beginnings and the influence it plays in my life, I could only wonder about the intricate layers of children's experiences in the shaping context of a school landscape. Prior to entering the classroom I was aware of the demographic changes[38] that Alberta schools were and are experiencing. Yet, knowing this, I subsequently learned, did little to convey how the lives of Lilly, Dana, Owen, Song, and the children's families in my study, lives attached to multiple places, shaped and were shaped by the school landscape in which they were situated. It was my hope prior to entering the classroom that stories would emerge revealing the children's understanding of themselves between landscapes and plotlines and the process of negotiation which school landscapes entail. These stories did emerge. However my understanding of the children was something which occurred over time, and upon reflection, could not have been hurried along. As simple as it sounds, I learned that people and their stories are never narratively complete (Miller, 1998) making me believe that my own wakefulness (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) was indeed temporally, contextually, and relationally bound. These were moments I lived with the children and Song in their classroom and with the children and their families in their homes over a temporal continuum in relationship with them.

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[38] In the year 2005 the net interprovincial migration total for Alberta was 41,707 and the net international migration total was 14,377. The total growth of the province taking into account migration and birthrate was 80,058 (Alberta Finance Statistics, 2006)

Layering and Carving: The Process of Writing Research Texts

One evening in conversation with Jean Clandinin while she and I talked about writing multiperspectivally, Jean Clandinin reminded me of how necessary it was to explain how my writing had occurred. She went on to wonder aloud about the images that might possibly convey the multiple threads running throughout each of the children's stories to live by and their relations to their families, their school experiences, and their relationship with Song. As she talked, she played with the idea of how an artist might understand the conveyance of multiple subjects in terms of positioning, and particularly referred to the term background. Later that evening, long after our conversation had ended, while silently replaying the words we had exchanged, I returned to Jean Clandinin's point about artistry and positioning. This was a moment which made me wonder anew and recall the lithograph, *Three Worlds*, by the Dutch graphic artist M.C. Escher (2001). In his own words Escher describes the lithograph as a:

> Picture of a woodland pond…made up of three elements: the autumn leaves which show the receding surface of the water, the reflection of three trees in the background and, in the foreground, the fish seen through the clear water. (p.12-13)

Borrowing from the picture depicted in the lithograph and Escher's use of the terms background and foreground to explain the positioning of the trees and the fish in the picture, I was drawn to this image in relation to writing multiperspectivally.

That evening as I stared at the picture created by Escher's lithograph, the image's simplicity and complexity was striking as were Escher's use of the terms fore and background to explain the balance of the trees in relation to the fish beneath the water. This image and these terms danced enticingly in my mind as I thought about the narrative accounts depicting the children; yet, despite my effort to make the connection between the two, it could not be done. Leaving the image for the evening I returned to it the next morning and looked at it anew. Seeing it afresh this time I noted the autumn leaves which linger on the surface of the water filling the fore, back, and middle grounds of the picture much like the children's families, their school experiences, and their relationship with Song as present throughout the retelling of the children's stories. Although I noted this observation with some interest, I was still left cold with Escher's description of the image as "made up of three elements" as I considered the multiplicity within the children's lives.

Although the image rendered by the lithograph may be of 3 elements, the narrative accounts written about the children were not composed with a finite number in mind. When I consider the accounts written about the children, I am still drawn visually to art; yet, my understanding about writing in a multiperspectival manner is more about the gradual application and layering of paint as opposed to elemental composition and structure. This thought leads me back to the classroom and a memory I have of the children creating leaf etchings one afternoon in mid October, a process which began with the deliberate coloring of a letter sized piece of paper using heavy pastel crayons.

As I walked about the classroom on that particular afternoon I was struck by the care and detail the children invested into their coloring as a variety of bright colors filled their pages. Mindful of Song's instructions, their fingers pressed hard onto the crayons resulting in thick colorful layers of rainbow stripes across formerly blank pages. This step was followed by another application of color, this time of black paint, and the children painted carefully enveloping the colors in darkness. Leaving the paint to dry overnight, the next day the activity resumed and supplied with sharp paperclips the children began to carefully carve around the leaves they had gathered from the playground. As each child carved, a tapestry of colors rose on their pages in the shapes of many different leaves. Once the leaves had been traced the children then went onto to carve a likeness inside the leaf of the veins crisscrossing its surface. Despite the effort that went into this activity some of the children decided they did not like their results leading them to quickly repaint their paper again. When I asked one child in the classroom, Simar, why she had done so, she smiled and reassured me that it would be better the next time she tried.

Returning to the conversation Jean Clandinin and I had about writing multiperspectivally, I am struck by how my memory of the children creating the leaf etchings conveys the sense of multiplicity I felt while writing their accounts. As the children layered the pastel colors upon their papers, I am reminded of the deliberateness of this act, the colors they chose, the positions they placed them in, and the thickness with which they colored. All of this was in anticipation of what would appear once the black paint had dried and they were able to carve and scratch away the paint to reveal the colors underneath. The black paint was the second layer and it was temporally bound. Time needed to pass so that the paint could dry and the children could then begin carving the leaf images they chose. Like coloring, the act of tracing the leaves was deliberate as well. Leaves of different shapes and sizes were chosen and once the paint had dried and a leaf had been traced, its image emerged only revealing a glimpse of its colorful foundation lying underneath. In addition to the deliberate choices the children had made while creating these leaf etchings, was also the sense of improvisation which accompanied it. One child announced to his classmates that if they had trouble using a paper clip to trace the leaves then they could use their pencils as it did much the same thing. In addition, there were the children who decided they did not like their first leaf etching effort, something which resulted in their decision to begin again. Although the repainting of their paper was a deliberate choice, there was no guarantee that they would like it the next time around. I am reminded of Simar, however, who assured me that it would be better the next time. Perhaps, she was confident her experience in this endeavor would lend itself to her understanding of how to go about the leaf etching the second time she tried.

Returning to my own process of writing and borrowing from what I remember about the children and their leaf etchings, I too am aware of the choices I made. I read field texts, chose tension-filled moments, and from them looked temporally back and forth as I recalled the events, people, and places surrounding those moments in relation with the children's stories to live by. Like the first stage of the leaf etchings, I, too, colored, colored my understanding of the children's lives with multiple moments lived in the classroom and in conversations with them and their families while being mindful of

Song. As I wrote the children's narrative accounts, reminiscent of the leaves which were traced, I attempted to trace moments through the children's lives, moments which pointed towards their multiple contexts, relationships, and experiences informing their stories to live by. Writing in this manner called upon me at times to improvise; repaint what I had written, learn from my previous efforts, and to try again. The children in the narrative accounts are the forefront of the story retold; yet, lying in the middle and background of their retellings are their families, their school experiences, their multiple landscapes, and their relationship with Song. Admittedly, the retelling depicted is only a partial glimpse of the children and the multiplicity running throughout their lives. Like the colors seen outlining the thin lines of the traced leaves, the narrative accounts can only reveal so much of the multiplicity, the colors, inherent in the children and their stories to live by.

Looking Ahead

In the pages which follow, there are 3 chapters focusing upon the lives of Owen, Dana, and Lilly, the children I grew to know during my time in Song's classroom and in their homes alongside their families. In chapter 7, looking across the narrative accounts, I pulled forward the tensions which resonated among them. I discuss the notion of tension and how tension may be understood as something relationally and experientially situated shaping each of the children's lives. I developed a richer understanding of the tensions I saw the children as experiencing in their classroom curriculum making. Exploring the relational tensions shaping the children's lives and their interactions in curriculum making, in chapter 8, I considered the ways tension may be understood as educative and as a part of classrooms.

As a way to remind the reader of matters earlier discussed, although the children are in the forefront of each retelling, it is imperative to read with an understanding that the children's families, their school experiences, and their relationship with Song are also interwoven presences, the fore, middle, and background if you will, of these accounts. Much like the children's leaf etchings, individual and diverse colorful representations, I aspired to write in such a way. Without the families, the children's relationship with Song, and the multiple landscapes of their lives as understood company, the chapters you are about to read would not be the multiperspectival[39] renderings I have attempted to portray.

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[39] I understand the term multiperspectival as a notion which helps me to focus on the children's lives in multiple ways: the multiple perspectives of the children's lives, perspectives which included their own, their family's, and Song's; the multiple contexts of the children's lives, contexts which included home and school landscapes; and the multiple plotlines of the children's lives, plotlines which lived in relation with particular contexts, relationships, and experiences. By drawing upon all of these, I attempted to intensively explore the children's experiences as a way to construct a narrative account about each of them.

CHAPTER FOUR

Owen: Negotiating on the Move ~ Amid and Upon Multiple Landscapes

Unexpected Moments

On March 5, 2007 Owen[40] and I began our lunchtime conversations. In spite of this being the first time we met outside of the classroom for a formal discussion, I was relaxed about our upcoming talk and was looking forward to it. Over the fall and early winter months Owen often chatted with me in the classroom about himself: the books he liked to read, his family's businesses, as well as his memories of a trip to Korea. Looking back upon these moments, I believe my comfort level with Owen was due to our interactions in the classroom throughout the fall and early winter months. These in-classroom moments[41] grabbed my attention and drew me to him during the time I was situated there.

In early October, in conversation with Jean Clandinin and Song, I spoke about Owen as one of the children I was drawn to. I described Owen as "a little ball of energy" and how intrigued I was by all of his "interesting sides" (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2007). My comments to Jean Clandinin and Song came after a brief moment that Owen and I shared a week earlier in the classroom. As the Thanksgiving long weekend was only a few days away, I was helping the children write sentences about what they felt thankful for. Owen was finding this activity difficult and came to me for some help. As we brainstormed together about what he could possibly write, I learned bits and pieces about him. I learned that his family owned a restaurant and I made jokes about how I would have been thankful for this when I was in grade 3. He laughed at my comments, but he did not seem to take my suggestions seriously. This brief moment was the beginning of our frequent in-classroom chats and, as I explained to Song and Jean Clandinin, the next day Owen "seemed to open up and there was lots of little things he's [now] talking about…I don't know much about his family background or anything like that…Except [that] he's recently moved and he just started at the school" (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2007).

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[40] I begin this narrative account about Owen in the midst of our relationship. Rather than beginning with any one description, for fear of categorizing him, I have chosen to start in ways that emphasize his life.

[41] Throughout this dissertation the terms in-classroom and out-of-classroom places are employed frequently. Their use is based upon my understanding of Clandinin's and Connelly's (1995) conceptualization of the professional knowledge landscape and its locations.

Although Owen and I spent a lot of time together in class, in the month of March there was still much that I did not know about him. I was anxious to begin our conversations about the experiences he had told me about in class. Our relationship initially developed in the warm familiarity of his classroom and it did not occur to me that moving our relationship to another room would influence the way in which we talked to one another. I took it for granted that our relationship, an in-classroom relationship, would transition itself smoothly to another room down the hallway when we began our recorded conversations.

Our first conversation began awkwardly. When I stopped by the class to meet up with Owen and to show him where we would be having lunch and our talk, he seemed happy to see me, but later appeared confused after he learned we were to have our lunch in a different room. As he followed me he seemed slightly puzzled and I realized he thought we were going to have our lunch in the classroom (Field notes on conversation, March 5, 2007).

The tense note on which our conversation began followed us down the hallway and into the "collaboration" room. This room is located at the front entrance of the school. The room is small and the table in the room is far too large for its space. The uncomfortable nature of the room is further emphasized by the many chairs placed around the table leaving little space to walk around as well as its lack of windows to the outside. At the far end of the room there is a large frosted window, quite impossible to see through clearly. Near the entrance of the room is a clear window and if standing in the hallway, one can see easily into the room. This room was one of the few rooms available at lunch hour for our conversations. The other room was located in the central office next to the principal's room. Due to the amount of traffic going in and out of the office at lunch hour on any routine day, Song had suggested that the better option was the collaboration room, away from the administrative busyness of that place.

Inside the room Owen sat at the end of the table near the entrance with his back to the window. His lunch bag sat before him on the table. Unlike his greeting to me minutes before, he was no longer smiling and I began to feel uncomfortable as I wondered what the problem might be. Before I sat down or had the opportunity to turn on the recorder, he startled me with a question about why I had chosen him for the study. In the following field note, on that same evening of our conversation, I attempted to capture the discomfiture of these initial minutes together.

> Before I ran back to get his lunch from the microwave, he startled me by asking if I was talking to everyone in his class. Using his lunch as an excuse I said I would answer him as soon as I got back and went and grabbed his lunch while also using the time to compose my answer to his tough question. When I walked back in

> with his lunch, I asked him his question again and he explained that he knew Lilly, Dana, and Ji-Sook were having conversations. I did not correct him. He said sometimes different people know different things than him about the study. I tried to explain who I was talking to…He asked if I was only talking to kids who were not Canadian...I was confused for a second and this must have shown on my face for I said something about them all being Canadian. He explained what he meant was that he thought I was talking to kids who were from other places...I said this was true that I was talking to them because they had a lot of knowledge about other places. (Field notes on conversation, March 5, 2007)

Throughout this first conversation, he seemed to be quite nervous and he spoke, at times, in whispers causing me, sometimes, to repeat what he said for the benefit of the recorder while, at other times, I would ask him to repeat himself. During these opening moments and once the recorder had been turned on, he later asked me why we were having our conversation in this room. Still reeling from his first question, I was not attentive to this one and the possible tension he was feeling about being here. In response to him, I replied "in the class with everybody around…the [digital] recorder can only pick up certain sounds and then it starts to get a little bit confused by all the noise" (Recorded conversation, March 5, 2007). Due to our comfortable in-classroom relationship, I was surprised by his reaction as a week earlier Owen had seemed comfortable with the idea of our upcoming conversation.

Wonders about this Out-of-Classroom Place

Having already had a conversation with two of Owen's classmates and with his mother, I was fairly confident Owen understood that we would eat lunch and in between talk about the time/lifeline he had drawn in class. I later learned from Song the depth of Owen's discomfort about where we had met for lunch.

> As they neared the Telus World of Science, Owen mentioned to Song that their conversation was a lot like the one him and Ms. Mitton had but was "different…" She was intrigued to hear more about this and then Logan told them a story. Afterwards, she asked Owen to tell her more about how it was different. He told her that he was a bit "nervous" that day and he felt weird because he thinks people were wondering why he was in that room. (Field notes, March 9, 2007)

Concerned that I had unintentionally misinformed Owen, in our next conversation I asked him if he had any questions about the study and the room in which we were having our conversations. Owen assured me he had "adjusted to [the room]" and that he understood our conversations were held here otherwise in the "classroom…there's a lot of noise and the recorder might not hear" (Recorded conversation, March 15, 2007). I was relieved to hear his response, but now as I look back, I wonder if Owen's assurances were because of me and our relationship, a relationship that had developed over time in the secure atmosphere of his classroom. There is also the possibility that he did not want to disappoint Song, someone whom he trusted and loved. From the very beginning of the school year, Song had welcomed and included me in the life of the classroom, and I believe, for many of the children, I was connected to Song and their positive feelings about her. At the same time, I am also drawn to other alternatives.

There is the possibility that Owen's peers began to ask him questions about why he was chosen, questions which made him feel there were, possibly, some benefits in being involved in this relationship with me outside of the in-classroom place. Perhaps, Owen felt this gave him some sort of status in the eyes of his peers. Reflecting upon Owen's initial reaction, and my assumption that he was confused when I said we were leaving the classroom, I believe, it is possible that he was not confused, but may have been disappointed. Once he gathered his lunch, he had walked back to his desk with his lunch bag and sat down. The awkwardness only began when I informed him that we were leaving the classroom for our talk. I wonder if he had wanted to stay in the class for our conversation so that his peers would see him with me while we chatted. After lunch, on that same day, Owen made a point of telling the class about the cookie[42] I had given him. During this particular moment Owen raised his hand and interrupted Lilly's star-of-the week interview by saying he had a comment to make. He explained that because she talked about the cookies she bakes with her mother, he was reminded of the cookie I had given him at lunch time (Field notes, March 5, 2007).

In choosing this moment to make his comment, Owen managed to shift the attention away from his classmate, Lilly, and onto his relationship with me, attention which Lilly quickly attempted to get back by pointing out to him, she too had received a cookie for she and I were also having conversations. This instance does make me wonder if part of our relationship was developed around Owen's wish to be noticed by his peers. Yet, I am also drawn to the comments Owen made to Song, and what he told her after our first meeting in the collaboration room, a place where he was "wondering why he was in that room." Thinking about Owen, his comments to Song, and the tension surrounding our first conversation makes me wonder who and what Owen was originally concerned about by meeting with me outside of the classroom in that specific place.

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[42] For each lunch time conversation with the children, I made sure to bring treats for Owen, Dana, and Lilly. This became a part of our conversation routine as I tried to surprise them each week. However, I also acknowledge that bringing treats did cause some tension between some of the students in the classroom and me, something which I tried to rectify by bringing cookies for the entire class on two occasions.

Occasionally, in the collaboration room, throughout the months of March and April, I bumped into different specialists conducting tests, in their attempts to narrow down the possible learning difficulties some of the Streamside student population faced. It was March when Owen and I began our conversations and, I believe, Owen was far more knowledgeable about the school's out-of-classroom places than I was. Perhaps, Owen had heard from his peers this room was occasionally used for testing and because he was a newcomer to Streamside, having only arrived in September of grade 3, possibly Owen was concerned people might understand him as someone who needed to be "tested". Perhaps, he thought I might be actually testing him as he did ask me which of the children in Song's classroom I was focusing upon and why. Perhaps, he was concerned that his presence in this room might mean there was something was wrong with him. Perhaps, because he had made some new friends in his class, Owen did not want these friendships to be jeopardized with negative assumptions about his learning ability. It is possible there were stories Owen knew of this room and, possibly, there were ones he feared he did not know. The room itself, its known and unknown history, I believe, was an unseen presence in our first conversation.

Although I had been in the classroom with Owen and his classmates since the end of September, it is the tension around our first recorded conversation in March which makes me think harder about Owen's concerns about who he was in relation with his peers, Song, and me. His concern about the "people [who were] wondering why he was in that room" also reminds me of my own difficulties, years ago, as a new student in a school attempting to convey to others what I knew about myself as I tried to make friends. This was a time when I was reading an unknown school landscape with stories to live by better suited to another time and place.

Attending to the Multiple Landscapes in Owen's Life

On the day of our first conversation, prior to the awkwardness which erupted in our relationship once we moved to a new room, I was hoping to speak with Owen about his time/lifeline, something each student in the class had created in late December. Their time/lifelines were developed around the topic of important memories and stories (Field notes, December 20, 2006). Periodically throughout our conversations in March and April, I would revisit the time/lifelines with Owen, Dana, and Lilly to see if they wanted to revise or add anything new to them.

I was initially struck by the shape of Owen's time/lifeline when I saw it. Shaped like a ladder, each "rung" of the ladder names a year and something particular within that year. It begins with 1998 and his birth in a large Canadian city and each subsequent year names an event: "1998: moved out [and moved to a new home in large Canadian city]"; "2001: went to h… p… preschool"; "2002[43]: moved to [small Canadian town]"; "2003[44]: went to a school named b… elementary in kindergarten"; "2006: moved to [mid-size Canadian city]" (Owen's time/lifeline, December 20, 2006). The examples I share are 6 of the 10 "rungs" filled in on Owen's time/lifeline. As illustrated, these examples focus upon the places Owen lived in and the schools he attended prior to his arrival at Streamside School.

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[43] In conversation with Owen's mother, Miso, she pointed out to me that the family had moved to the small Canadian town in 2003 (Field notes on conversation, September 18, 2007).

[44] Owen was concerned he had not emphasized to me the fact that he attended his former school for three years from kindergarten until the end of grade two. He asked me to make a note of this (Field notes on conversation, March 13, 2008).

Despite my efforts to revisit his time/lifeline, unlike Dana and Lilly, Owen did not want to revise or add anything new and he resisted my efforts whenever it was mentioned. He explained in our first conversation that "I wouldn't really add anything. Because I only do it by the year…and I don't want to" (Recorded conversation, March 5, 2007). Surprised by his response I did not push and hoped that Owen's reason might come up later. Owen's reasons for not wanting to revise his time/lifeline inadvertently arose in a later conversation during a moment when Owen misunderstood a question I asked him about his plans for the school break in March.

Jen: Do you have any plans on March break?

Owen: [unclear response]

Jen: Are you staying in [in the city]?

Owen: Oh yeah …usually [we] just…move…every 2 months. Every 2…years.

Jen: Mmmhmm.

Owen: I'm not really sure [why]. I'm not really sure and…last time in [the small town]—we lived there for about 2 years… (Recorded conversation, March 22, 2007)

At first I was uncertain as to what Owen was referring to. Once I understood, unfortunately, I persisted in asking him about his plans for the holiday rather than picking up on why he felt he and his family moved every 2 years. There seems to be uncertainty in Owen's explanation about his family's previous moves, and, perhaps, if I had pursued this line of discussion, he might have offered me the same response of "I'm not really sure."

In conversation with Owen's mother, Miso, about why she likes moving to different places, she explained that "I [have] never lived [in] one place [for] more than four years, three years. Every time I move. So…for me…it's good. [I'm] happy and there's…something to [be] challenge[d] [about]" (Recorded conversation, April 5, 2007). Her interest in "challenges" was something she shared with her husband as they looked for new ways to expand their business opportunities, opportunities, she explained, which had to be acted upon quickly if they were to be successful, "Suppose that…chance… [I mean] it's not always here, right? See this [chance]…we have… [to] grab it, and we try. If it's good then, you know, it's good, if it's not good then we still have the business [in the small town]…" (Recorded conversation, April 5, 2007).

In previous conversations, Miso shared with me how difficult it was for her and her husband when they moved to Canada in 1997. During this time she and her husband both attended English language school in a large Canadian city and her husband, educated as a computer programmer and engineer, could not find work in his profession. This situation, ultimately, led them to begin their own business. The hard work Owen's family invested in their businesses, possibly partially explains the reason for their frequent moves. Perhaps, as well, it also may explain some of Owen's reasons for why he felt he could not add anything to his time/lifeline, feeling as he did that this was something he could only do "by the year" since he and his family "move every 2 years."

In early October of 2006, I learned that Owen was new to the city and to Streamside School. This came up in one of our classroom conversations as I tried to help him brainstorm about the things he was thankful for in his life during a Thanksgiving craft activity. Complicating for Owen as he tried to establish relationships at Streamside School was his family's life circumstances and the 2 homes they moved between. During the week he lived in the city with his mother, sister, and 2 cousins and attended school. On the weekend he and his family returned to the small town where the family business was located to be with his father. Throughout my time in the classroom, Owen had often chatted with me about the books he read, his family's businesses, as well as memories of previous trips to Korea, his parent's home country. Before I learned of Owen's recent arrival, I understood his active class participation as an indicator he had been Streamside for a few years[45].

> After school, Song mentioned how impressed she was by Owen's participation today and I wondered if Owen, who mentioned to me 2 weeks ago that he was new, is now getting used to being in this class. (Field notes, October 16, 2006)

In early October as I tried to help Owen generate ideas to write about, I watched him play with his pencil while he kept his eyes cast down onto the handout lying before him. He asked me what I was thankful for at Thanksgiving and I suggested a few possibilities, all of which he turned down. In a later conversation with Miso I described to her this "Thanksgiving" moment and how surprised I was to learn from Owen that he was a new student to the school.

> Jen: Because it was funny, I met [Owen] at the end of September and then I got to know him and I talked with him. The Thanksgiving letter that you and I talked about? He said [to me] "what would you write?" I said "maybe…I'd write about

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[45] In March, as Owen and I discussed the ways he participated in Song's classroom throughout the fall of 2006, he explained that he liked being active. He said he was quiet the first few days of school in September, but after that he tried really hard to participate (Field notes on conversation, March 13, 2008).

> being thankful for my friends" [because] I didn't know that he had moved from [the small town]. I didn't know. And he…sighed [he said] "I don't have any friends here". I said "but I see you talking to people." He said "no, no they're nice. They don't know me" And I said "but they will, it's only the end of September, beginning of October" and he said "OK." But now I see him in class and it's even more different. Because he has so many friends… (Recorded conversation, December 14, 2006)

Before I knew Owen was new to the school and being struck by Owen's class participation as well as the friendly manner in which he interacted with his peers, I had assumed my suggestion of friendship would be taken up by him. During this moment, I was unaware of Owen's thoughts about friendship or of his experiences with friendship. Despite my assurances to Miso in our December conversation that Owen "has so many friends", at that time, I did not know if, indeed, Owen felt like he had friends in the classroom. In early October, I was intrigued by his comments about not having friends, but I interpreted this as a sign of his newcomer status to Streamside School. I assumed he would make friends like many children do when they move to new places and schools, and, certainly, over time Owen did. Although Owen's friendship experiences were not something I initially picked up on at the beginning of our relationship, I was interested in what Owen might make of his experiences as a new student in this school in a much larger city than the town he moved from in the summer. Once we started to meet during lunch hours, later that school year, I began to learn more about Owen's friendship experiences and the tensions surrounding them, in particular the struggle Owen believed it was to make friends[46].

Becoming Wakeful to Owen's Emphasis on Friendship

Despite Owen's discomfort and nervousness in our first conversation, he did speak about his friendship experiences. As we gradually moved past the opening moments of tension, Owen and I made small talk about his family's businesses which were located in two small towns approximately an hour from the large city in which he and his mother lived. The topic of Owen's friendship experiences came up suddenly and was not precipitated by me with a question. In response to a comment I made about his family's business plans, he informed me that "in [my old school] I made a lot of friends" (Recorded conversation, March 5, 2007). He continued to explain that his friends were "not much more than here because there [was] less people in my class [there]…because there was only about 19 people [in my old class]"[47]. I was momentarily confused by his emphasis on the number of his friends, but recovered to ask about the types of things he and his friends did when he was in the small town. Owen informed me that they usually "met at the park" and then he proceeded to talk more specifically about one friend, Tom, whose house he went to "lots of times."

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[46] In conversation with Miso as I shared a draft of the account I had written about Owen, we talked about the word friendship and how its meaning can depend upon the cultural background of the individual using it. She suggested that perhaps Owen's use of the word "friend" in that moment at the beginning of the school year was more aligned with a Korean interpretation of the word. Possibly, she said, Owen meant he had acquaintances, but because he was new he had not made any close friends as of yet (Field notes on conversation, September 18, 2007).

[47] I felt this particular statement by Owen was significant and wanted it to appear in his own words. I believe Owen wanted to clarify the number of friends he had at his old school as approximately the same as the number of friends he had at Streamside. Owen liked to be exact when describing things.

I am unsure what instigated Owen to begin speaking about his friends who lived in the small town as prior to his announcement that he had "made a lot of friends in [the small town]" we had been speaking generally about his family's grocery store and their possible plans on opening an organic foods business. Although Owen suggests in his first sentence that he has a large number of friends there, he soon tempered this by explaining that his number of friends in the small town is "not much more than [at Streamside] because there's less people in my class [there]." When Owen brought up his friend Tom, I assumed I would learn more about the types of things he and Tom did together. Owen, however, seemed hesitant about saying too much about this and preferred to explain that Tom "usually just comes to the park and I went to the park." Later he shared they "sometimes r[o]de bikes and sometimes like [went] outdoors" (Recorded conversation, March 5, 2007). I was struck by Owen's succinct answers in this moment. Generally, Owen did not speak for long periods of time, particularly if it was a question which seemed not to interest him or if he was unsure of himself. However in those moments when he chose to initiate a point of discussion, in class or with me, he could speak at some length. Although Owen described Tom as someone who "was my best friend", Owen, in this conversation and in our later ones, chose not to share many details about their play time activities.

For Owen, it seemed how many friends he had was meaningful and possibly this contributed to his own understanding of himself as suggested in his statement "in [my old school], I made a lot of friends." Talking about his friends and where he had friends was a significant starting point in our lunchtimes together. Later in this same conversation, it led to Owen talking about his friendships in relation to the different schools he previously attended as he recalled the nervousness he felt on his first day of school in Song's classroom[48].

Jen: What made [you nervous]?

Owen: Some school[s]... I don't make any friends at all[49].

Jen: Which, say that again?

Owen: Sometimes at some schools I don't make any friends.

Jen: But you had lots of friends in [the small town].

Owen: But not many friends in [the large city][50] and, and also [at the] preschool [in the large city].

Jen: Huh?

Owen: No, I only had one friend.

Jen: But you were kind of little then.

Owen: Yeah.

Jen: So I mean that's sort of different. What about friends when you went to school in Korea?

Owen: Not really. About like one.

Jen: Yeah. Well, you were only there a short time.

Owen: Yeah. (Recorded conversation, March 5, 2007)

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[48] In March, 2008, both Owen and Miso commented on Owen's first day of school at Streamside in September, 2006. They both agreed he had been very nervous. Owen said his first day now seemed like a very long time ago (Field notes on conversation, March 13, 2008).

[49] Owen was surprised by the comments he made to me in March, 2007. His use of the words "at all" to signify the friends he was unable to make particularly seemed to bother him. He said if he were to talk about this again he would change that sentence to "Sometimes I don't make a lot of friends." He emphasized that he felt he had lots of friends at Streamside School (Field notes on conversation, March 13, 2008).

[50] Owen was referring to a different city in this moment and not the one in which Streamside School is located.

Similar to his previous comments, in this moment Owen seemed to be quantifying the number of friends he once had in previously lived places. It was also a moment in which his nervousness seemed to have returned. When he first explained that at "some schools I don't make any friends at all", he whispered, making me ask him to repeat himself. Throughout this exchange I attempted to comfort him. I emphasized the friends he had at his old school, how young he was when he attended preschool as well as the brief period of time he attended school in Korea. Owen's memories of the number of friends he had while living in certain places seemed to contribute to his reasoning for why he believed "at some schools I don't make any friends." However this also makes me wonder why Owen chose to remain quiet about the number of friends he felt he had at his former school. Possibly, what contributed to Owen's feeling about his friendship experiences at his preschool and in Korea was the brief period of time in which he lived/visited those places. At the time of this conversation, Owen was eight years old and Streamside School was his fourth school to attend.

Owen's Story of Making Friends

> I know when I belong, when I make lots of friends and some close friends like Liam and Joe and Logan [friends at Streamside School]. I know when I don't belong when I only have a few friends and a lot of people don't like me. (Owen's writing, February 14, 2007)

On this day, for this particular lunchtime conversation, I was hoping that Owen and I would have the opportunity to speak about a paragraph he had written in class about belonging. All of the children in the class took part in this writing activity and were encouraged by Song to express what belonging meant to each of them. Their writing was later used as part of the Valentine's Day's activities. I was hoping that Owen, in response to what he had written, might revisit his understanding of friendship and his own friendship experiences.

We did not immediately begin talking about belonging or friendships. Like our other conversations, we started off gradually and talked about books[51] before we moved onto other topics like events in school or at home. Because Owen's mother had recently been ill, during this conversation, I asked how she was feeling as I knew that Owen's father had come to the city to look after her and the family while she was unwell.

Jen: Hmm. I remember you saying that you liked it because your dad was here. But you didn't like it because your mom wasn't feeling well.

Owen: Well, uh,

Jen: So it was hard, wasn't it?

Owen: Well, it was sort of fun, but…

Jen: Hmm…

Owen: I want[ed] my mom to feel better, but when she feels better, then my dad will go, well—then [my] dad won't feel better.

Jen: Right. So you're kind of in the middle. Trying to figure it out. Happy to see him but you don't want her sick.

Owen: And I don't want him to go cause.

Jen: Oh, of course not. How long was he here? How many days?

Owen: About 5.

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[51] In March, 2008, Owen, while talking about the ways he and I used to discuss books, reminded me that he had "never encountered a book I didn't like" (Field notes on conversation, March, 13, 2008).

Jen: Oh. Well that was nice. Not good for your mom, but, cause she was feeling bad, but good for you. Well actually good for everybody.

Owen: My dad can't visit for a long time, about 2 weeks. (Recorded conversation, March 22, 2007)

In this instance I began to better understand the amount of movement in Owen's life and the particular places he moved amid: Streamside School and his home in the city, Streamside School and his home in the small town, and the multiple places in between like the small town park and the family businesses. Although Owen's time/lifeline had informed me of the number of places he had previously lived, the time/lifeline does not convey the complexity of Owen's life as he moved amid multiple places and people, something which made his home life different than his peers. It was in this moment, a moment in which Owen was torn between wanting his father to stay and wanting his mother to feel better, that I began to think further about the tensions surrounding Owen's life circumstances. It also made me wonder if moments such as these also contributed to Owen's desire to have friends at school, relationships rooted in a particular place and where he spent much of his time.

Owen and I continued our conversation and talk about home segued into talk about the upcoming school spring break and report cards. As there was little time left before the recess bell rang, I reminded Owen about his writing on belonging. In response to his writing, Owen shared an experience which disrupted my previous understandings of his small town friendship experiences. Once I finished reading aloud his writing, in response to it, Owen explained that "I didn't have [that] many friends in [the small town]" and "like four or five didn't like me" (Recorded conversation, March 15, 2007). I asked what he meant by his old classmates not liking him, but Owen did not respond to my question and attempted to change the topic. I persisted, and repeated my initial question by asking "how did you know they didn't like you? Did they say Owen we don't like you?" Owen explained that some of the children "just showed" they didn't like him by "sometimes…let[ting] me play along with them and sometime[s] they didn't let me play." Unlike what I normally did when tension arose in our conversations, I continued to ask questions by what he meant by his former classmates "just annoy[ing]" him and asked him to elaborate upon this. Owen started off with concise examples "like they chased me around the classroom once" and on the playground "they gave me weird math questions like some of the things that I couldn't add that fast." Owen's last example confused me as I initially did not understand how "weird math questions" could be a way of showing him they "didn't like him." In response to my puzzlement, Owen replied "they th[ought] Koreans [were] really stupid[52]" (Recorded conversation, March 15, 2007).

In our first conversation on March 5, Owen had talked about the many friends he had in the small town; yet, later, also explained that "sometimes at some schools I don't make any friends." In our first conversation Owen told a fairly smooth story of his small town friendship experiences, which, perhaps, contributed to the feelings of surprise I had while listening to his story and which also, may have caused me to press further for more details. I was troubled, particularly when Owen explained that he was given "weird math questions" because some of his classmates thought "Koreans [were] really stupid." This also made me think more deeply about Owen's discomfort in the collaboration room during our first conversation on March 5. Perhaps, also present, were Owen's experiences of being marginalized. Possibly, this was something that added to his tension as he wondered why he had been chosen for the study and if his participation would mean disruption to his new friendships.

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[52] In conversation with Miso, about the occasions Owen was teased in school, Miso was aware of this particular story and of others. Miso explained this was one of the reasons why they moved to the city. She said it was hard for Owen and his sister, Cho Hee, to be the only Korean children in such a small town (Field notes on conversation, September, 27, 2007).

During this same conversation, in response to my assumption that it was mostly boys teasing him, Owen pointed out that "most of them are girls though" (Recorded conversation, March 15, 2007). He admitted quickly afterwards, however, that there was one boy, Bobby, who did not like him. Our conversation continued and Owen explained that "[Bobby] used [to] think that I was…stupid, too. Until the end of the year. Then I got…all A's. Well…not all A's but one B and all A's." (Recorded conversation, March 15, 2007). Owen later revealed that on Bobby's report card Bobby "got…five B's and one C." I was curious about Bobby's interest in Owen's grades and Owen's knowledge of his, and asked Owen if children in his old school compared their grades to which he replied they did not. Our conversation continued and Owen shared his own understanding of how his teacher may have played an important element in shifting Bobby's understanding of him.

> Owen: I didn't usually talk to them [the children who teased], but…Bobby just asked me, wanted to see what I got [on my report card] because…he thought that I'd done really bad. And I actually learned…
>
> Jen: Yeah. And he was surprised when you had good marks.
>
> Owen: …He didn't really believe me, but he's just really mad and he went like... "No really what did you get?"…And I said "Ask the teacher" and then he asked the teacher...

Jen: Ah. He even asked the teacher [be]cause he didn't believe you at first.

Owen: No [he didn't believe me at first]. (Recorded conversation, March 15, 2007)

In order for Bobby to believe that Owen received "one B and all A's" on his report card, Owen encouraged him to ask their teacher, a trusted source with whom Bobby could confirm what Owen had said he achieved. In this moment Owen did not reveal whether or not Bobby actually became a friend as a result of this exchange; but, it seemed for Owen that his "successful" report card helped shift Bobby's thoughts about him[53]. Owen's story also positions his teacher as vitally important in helping him to alter Bobby's perception of him as a person. This makes me reflect back to the early months of the school year and my initial impressions of Owen as someone who participated a great deal in class. Perhaps, because he was a new student and feeling the pressure of his prior experiences, he, during these initial months at Streamside School, was trying very hard to impress upon Song and his peers his intelligence through his constant class effort. Perhaps, Owen understood that being thought of as smart by others was part of the way in which one made friends, a belief which caused moments of tension for Owen as he and his classmates grew to know one another.

For me, not only was the content of Owen's story startling, but so was the timing of it. Ten days earlier Owen was uncomfortable in this very room. During that initial conversation, he chose to tell fairly smooth stories of who he was making me wonder what had happened in the classroom, in between our conversations, that might have encouraged Owen to think of sharing an experience such as this.

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[53] While Owen did not explicitly state, in this moment, that this event created a friendship between himself and Bobby, it led me to consider that Owen believed his successful report card and teacher helped shift Bobby's thoughts about him. Bobby was a name I regularly heard in Owen's friendship stories about his former school.

During this period of time in class, we were reading picture books as a way to incite the children's imaginations within the context of the citizenship education discussions. Soon after my first conversation with Owen, Song and the students had a series of interesting discussions in relation to the book *Tea with Milk* (Say, 1999). Say's story is of a young American girl of Japanese heritage who moves back to Japan with her parents who miss their homeland. In Japan, the young girl, Masako, feels like a foreigner as she tries to understand who she is in this new place.

Feeling unsatisfied with the children's first response to the book, Song revisited the story the next day and invited the children to think about what they did differently at home in comparison to their peers. While doing so, Song shared her own experiences of growing up and being Chinese-Canadian in a small town.

> Song told the children about how when she was a little girl, she was not that brave. She wanted to fit in and be like everyone else so she had to hide parts of her. She gave them the example of how she used to be afraid to bring Chinese food to school so instead she ate mustard and ham sandwiches which she didn't even like. She was afraid that the other children would make fun of the foods she ate because they looked different and smelled different. Then she told them, "Now I am much braver. I am proud to share my heritage with others. I always bring Chinese food to school and other teachers are curious about the foods that I eat." The children seemed intrigued by these stories and Song invited them to share their stories. Owen told the class that at his old school, they

> used to call him "Chinese boy"[54] even though he is Korean. Song told Owen that she knew exactly how he felt as she too grew up in a small town where her family was the only Asian family. She said they sometimes called her "Japanese girl" because they hadn't taken the time to find out who she is. She told the children sometimes people make fun of things or others when they do not understand. (Field notes, March 8, 2007)

I believe Owen felt comforted by what Song had shared with the class and by her doing so he felt encouraged to share with her and his peers an experience in which he was made to feel negatively different. Perhaps this experience in the classroom also allowed him to see possibilities in how he might reconsider his past experiences and retell them in new ways. I wonder if this is what he was sharing with me in our second conversation, a revised understanding, a new telling, of who he was at his old school and who his friends were.

This moment also reveals the trust Owen had in Song. Throughout the year during those tension-filled moments which arose for Owen as he interacted with others in curriculum making, Song was often there, helping him to negotiate new understandings of what had transpired and encouraging him to think about what he might do in the future.

Relational Disruptions and Negotiations on the Classroom Landscape

> I wandered about the room for a period of time. When I returned to where Owen and his group were working, they were no longer talking. I walked over and asked if I could help. Taylor was making what appeared to be a balcony and she

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[54] In March, 2008, as Owen and I talked about this moment, I told him I thought he was very brave to share this story and that, possibly, others would learn from this story. Owen told me that he thought this story, as well as his others, were "good" stories to tell. As we talked, Miso sat quietly nodding her head in agreement (Field notes on conversation, March 13, 2008).

> tried to stick it on the side of the "castle" the group was trying to build. Jackie, Mackenzie, and Charlie were just watching. Owen told Taylor he didn't like the balcony. I tried to help and asked who in the group did like it. The three girls said they did. Owen said that he and Charlie did not. I asked Charlie what he thought and he said he did like Taylor's balcony. Mackenzie and Jackie then complained to me that Owen was not listening to them and he was telling them what to do. I said something about the group liking Taylor's balcony and maybe Owen could explain why he didn't like it—maybe we could compromise? A few seconds passed... When Taylor tried to place the balcony again onto the castle, Owen stubbornly stuck his hand in front of the place she wanted and he would not remove his hand. He did not speak and he was not smiling. It became tenser and my uncertainty grew. I did not know what to say to Owen. I thought he was being stubborn, but when I tried to offer what I hoped were solutions he still did not move his hand. It grew worse when his eyes filled with tears and I could see he could not speak for fear of crying. (Field notes, February 26, 2007)

On this afternoon late in February, as part of a curricular focus testing the strength of materials and designs in science, the children were building castles using recyclable materials they brought from home. This particular task emphasized collaboration and each group of children approached this aspect differently. Prior to building, the children met with their groups and planned their castles. One of the criteria of this project was for the castle to be stable and strong, and once the structures were completed, a number of strength tests would be conducted. Each group varied in its approach. Owen's group, in their attempts to collaborate, soon ran into difficulties and I found myself trying to mediate as I listened to what each member of the group wanted. Once I intervened, I noticed Owen became silent, yet he continued to resist Taylor's idea of making her balcony a part of the structure as emphasized by his hand blocking her attempts.

Throughout the school year there were times when Owen found it difficult to negotiate with his peers during group work activities. On this particular afternoon the strain of working together slowly gathered. Before Owen bumped against his group members' ideas about their castle project, earlier in the afternoon I observed Owen take control of the materials and authoritatively tell his group how he thought the castle should look. At one point one of Owen's classmates, Charlie, someone whom Owen thought of as one of his good friends, suddenly left the group, threw himself into his chair, and placed his head on his desk. Although Owen's building logic made sense to me, I could see from the looks on his classmates' faces and from their complaints that they were not comfortable with Owen's directions.

Expressing his reasoning was sometimes challenging for Owen to do, and it occasionally led him into pressure filled situations. What transpired between Owen and his group was tension-filled, yet, it was not indicative of how Owen handled himself each time he worked with his peers. As I observed throughout the year, in other group work situations which became uncomfortable for Owen, he managed to express how he was feeling.

On one particular afternoon in October, I noticed Owen and two of his classmates, Nathan and Taylor, working together on a math worksheet. Nathan was very focused on teasing Taylor and Owen by cracking jokes and tossing some of the math blocks. Not quite knowing what to do in this situation I asked Nathan if he would like to work with me and he replied he was happy working with his group, and I heard Owen sigh aloud. Nathan continued to make jokes and I felt helpless in my efforts to help the group and resist the disciplinarian role, at which point Owen spoke up.

> Owen said to Nathan in an annoyed voice "Nathan stop goofing around." Nathan laughingly replied "I'm not goofing around—I'm helping" and Taylor said in sarcastic tones "That's help?" At this point Nathan accidentally stepped on her worksheet booklet ripping it and Song arrived. Song suggested that it could be taped and I took refuge in fixing Taylor's worksheets as Song spoke to Nathan. (Field notes, October 16, 2007)

In this moment Owen directly expressed his frustration with his classmate and his behavior. Although it did not solve the problem at hand, Owen was not reduced to tears as a result of it. Perhaps, Song's arrival consoled Owen that something was being done about his group member's behavior and it encouraged him to continue interacting with his group. There were other moments, however, when Owen withdrew from the group if he believed his ideas were not being taken into consideration or if he thought his group was not concentrating on the task at hand. During one of our conversations, I asked why Owen did not participate in the Valentine's Day play with his two group members. Owen explained that "it was good but…I didn't really participate" because he felt his group members "were just fooling around." Owen explained when he asked them to stop "they kept on not listening…and then I gave up" since he felt "frustrated" (Recorded conversation, March 5, 2007).

Owen's explanation for not participating was due to his group's "fooling around" and "not doing anything", something which eventually resulted in Owen withdrawing from the activity itself. The two members of Owen's play group were also two of his friends and, possibly rather than bringing tension into their relationships by becoming angry, Owen decided to withdraw from the activity thereby preventing further tension entering between them. Although Owen did not participate in the play, perhaps he felt this was worth doing in order to preserve his friendships.

When Owen and his group became deadlocked over what to do with their castle, possibly, what further complicated the moment, was Owen's loss of speech and his inability to explain why he felt as strongly as he did. It appeared he was determined to have his way as suggested by his hand positioned in front of the castle. Depending from whose perspective one looks, Owen's act of placing his hand in front of the castle may be interpreted as a sign of many things about him, some of which are possibly negative; yet, this is only a partial understanding of that moment and of Owen.

In and Out-of-Classroom Shifts in Owen's Stories to Live by

Class work and friendships were important to Owen as emphasized by the steps he took to sustain them, something which came up in his negotiations with me. During our third conversation, Owen asked half way through the lunch hour "And now, this time…can I… like go out for recess because I can't really talk—right—because I really just miss recess…" (Recorded conversation, March 22, 2007). My initial reaction to his request was disappointment followed by shame for not having thought earlier of the possibility that the children would want to go out for recess during lunch hour. The recess bell rang half way through the hour long break and while the girls chose to stay in for the full hour with me, after our second conversation, Owen would leave and head outside to be on the playground. Recess time on the playground was one of the places, I believe, in which Owen was cultivating his new friendships and living out a story of being a good friend. Had I been listening more attentively in an earlier conversation prior to his request, I would have been aware of this.

A week earlier during our second conversation I asked Owen about the friendships he seemed to have established in his classroom. Owen told a brief story about a classmate who took him out at recess to show him a snow fort that he and the other boys in the class were building. This turn of events led to Owen "going there [to the fort] [for] like weeks and weeks" and by helping the boys build their fort Owen felt he became "practically a crew member or something" (Recorded conversation, March 15, 2007).

Laying this moment alongside his request to leave early for recess, it becomes understandable why Owen possibly felt it was important that he go outside during the lunch break. Asking to leave early was one of the ways in which Owen negotiated with me his participation in our lunchtime conversations. He later informed me that he also went out for recess because "my mom wants me…to have a lot of exercise and stuff" (Recorded conversation, April 19, 2007). Although I initially felt disappointment over Owen's decision, I began to understand that this was a positive development in our relationship because he felt he could remain in relation with me while honoring his mother's request and also living out what he knew of himself on the playground. Going outside and participating in the lunchtime games that he and his friends created were Owen's attempts of sustaining his "crew member" status. On the playground, helping his friends build their fort, Owen belonged. There were other places, though, in which he struggled to be as physically agile as his peers. The gymnasium was one of these places.

Early in the year I noticed Owen as an active presence in the classroom based upon the number of questions he asked and the answers he gave; but, in the gymnasium he appeared uninterested and only went through the motions (Field notes, October 16, 2006).

> In gym the children played a large game of dodge ball; they were really excited to play. Owen was accidentally hit on the head with a ball and he crashed to the floor. I think he was more embarrassed than hurt. Song walked over and told him it was a good thing the balls were soft. Owen slowly got to his feet again. His behavior reminded me of the day he felt he had "sprained" his ankle while playing capture the flower. (Field notes, May 7, 2007)
>
> There was a tie when the bell rang. When the girls joined the boys, Song said something about girl power. I did notice that at one point Owen knocked over one of his team's skittles (bowling pins) and someone said "Oh Owen". Owen looked over at me and had that little look on his face like he didn't mean to. (Field notes, June 13, 2007)

Because Owen was not as quick or as physically responsive as some of his peers, he found it difficult to play the games in the some of the ways the other children did. Although Song did not encourage this kind of competitiveness, it still managed to find its way into some of the activities, particularly during Physical Education class where Owen struggled to be a contributing member of his team when such activities arose. Song was aware of this and commented to me that Owen was still one of the last boys to be chosen in gym class and that he really struggled in gym (Field notes, April 26, 2007). During moments when his physical awkwardness was brought to his classmates' attention, Owen, at times, had the tendency to suggest that something other than himself impeded his progress such as an injury.

Towards the latter part of the school year when the weather turned to more temperate conditions, Song and the class often went outside so that they would have a larger space to run freely in. Here, in these open spaces, speed was essential for some of the games they played and I noticed this was something Owen did not excel at although I wished it for him (Field notes, April 25, 2007). In gym class whether it was held inside or outdoors, it was challenging for Owen to be a good student as well as a good friend. In physical education class speed and agility were assets, physical characteristics which helped teams win games and improve individual game skills, and were qualities that Owen did not possess at that time. I believe, this made it all the more important for Owen to participate physically in activities in which he could be relied upon as a "crew member", like building a fort on the playground or building a castle in the classroom, as a way to sustain his friendships.

Revisiting Previously Lived Moments of In-Classroom Tension: Owen's Independent Spirit and the Notion of Narrative Unity[55]

In conversation with Miso, she pointed out that Owen's friends were one of the reasons why he missed living in the small town. She explained "[Owen] said…everybody kn[ew] him [there]…and where he play[ed]…you know, everybody [was] just watching him, you know…it's safe, I think" (Recorded conversation, April 5, 2007). Although there were difficulties being one of the few children from the only Korean family in this small town, it is understandable why Owen also missed living there on a full time basis, in a place where he felt people knew him well. Owen also negotiated with his mother about their small town trips and he took steps to be part of the preparations needed for these weekend visits. As explained by Miso "in the morning, [Owen] just prepared everything and pack[ed]…by himself…" (Recorded conversation with Miso, April 5, 2007). Taking the initiative to pack and prepare for their weekend trips to see his father was perhaps some of the ways Owen felt he was making an effort to sustain his friendships in the small town as well as his relationship with his father.

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[55] Clandinin and Connelly (1988) describe narrative unity "as a continuum within a person's experiences which renders life experiences meaningful through the unity they achieve for the person… [narrative unity] is the union in each of us in a particular place and time of all we have been and undergone in the past and in the tradition (the history and culture) that helped to shape us… for narrative unities emerge from our past, bring about certain practices in the present, and guide us toward certain practices in our future" (p.74-74). Drawing upon the notion of narrative unity helped me to think about the continuities and discontinuities of Owen's school experiences as I composed his narrative account. I also drew upon the notion of narrative unity while I composed narrative accounts about Dana and Lilly as well.

In this same conversation with Miso, I shared with her a story about Owen and how he lost his camera at school. After Owen had informed Song about the loss and how he thought he had left his camera in the gym, Song gave him permission to go look for it. Owen did not find his camera in the gym and on his own initiative went to the main office and asked the assistant principal to make an announcement about his lost camera. The announcement was made and Owen's camera was returned (Field notes, April 5, 2007). In response to my story, Miso shared one of her own stories about Owen and his independent spirit. In the following, I have removed my brief responses and prompts so that Miso's telling stands on its own.

> Oh yeah, I remember that when we were in Korea
> We went—[to a] shopping centre
> And…it's different and there's…always a book [playing area]
> The kids were there.
> Most parents…, you know, ask the kids to stay [there] to read a book [be]cause [they] will be shopping.
> And there's a [monitor], right?

So I did 'cause it's my two kids and my two nieces were there so…it's safe.
Yeah [Cho Hee, Owen's sister] is bigger.
Yeah in, in Korea it's not, you know [a] big deal
[When older children look after younger children]
So I did and…I was shopping
And I come back and Owen wasn't there.
Cho Hee and… my two [nieces] were there
But Owen wasn't there when [I arrived]

…They, they don't know actually what happened.
And…Cho Hee said…he want[ed] to go to the washroom, right?
But she was so…into the book that they d[idn't] [go].
After that…there [was] no Owen, right?

And it's huge, three levels of this shopping centre…
I didn't know what to do, right? I just ran…to the washroom
To find him…But he was [not there]

I heard—[an] announcement, yeah.
[Miso K…] will you please come to the service desk…
I ran there and he was happy and not scared.
He was reading a book, not…worried…he went [to the service desk]

And he isn't scared.
Ma[de] me go there to find him.
Ohhhh. ………..
Grade 1, yeah.
Grade 1…
I was worried but he just happy…talking with a [lady] there.
They were talking and happy…

Yeah, I worried.
Cho Hee almost, you know cried, you know …….
She had a guilty [conscience].
[She said] "He ask[ed] me, but I sa[id] no to him".

Owen was happy.
Yeah, that's Owen. (Recorded conversation, April 5, 2007)

As I listened to Miso, I learned a family story of Owen, one in which his independence and problem solving skills were a part of who he was. Despite being in an unknown place, Owen's response to his sister, who was unwilling to leave the play area and take him to the washroom, was to go and find it on his own. Later, when he was unable to retrace his steps back to her and his cousins, rather than panicking, Owen found a service desk and requested an announcement to be made for his mother. Two years later when unable to find his camera at school, it was narratively coherent[56] (Carr, 1986) for Owen to go to the office and ask the assistant principal to make this announcement. These two stories shared with me by Miso and Song shifted my previous understandings of children his age. I assumed that young children finding themselves in such situations would typically expect an adult to solve the problem for them, yet Owen did not. Solving problems such as these seemed to give Owen a sense of control over his landscape and perhaps helped him to negotiate with others across the multiple places he lived. Owen's tendency to solve matters on his own did empower him; but, periodically, it also caused great tension in the classroom for him and for his classmates.

Redirecting my focus back to the moment in which his classmates openly disagreed with Owen about the castle, I can see that his efforts to be a good friend were further strained by his desire to prove he was also a good student and the necessity of solving this problem on his own. Living out the story lines of being a good student and a good friend were in tension with one another particularly during moments when he was expected to work cooperatively with his peers, as I observed when Owen placed his hand in front of castle defying his group member's decision. As I recall Owen's story of Bobby and his curiosity about Owen's report card, narratively unifying (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) for Owen was his understanding that during tension filled moments such as these, it was important for him to reveal his cleverness and to solve the problem[57].

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[56] Carr (1986) speaks of narrative coherence "as a a constant effort [in life], even a struggle, to maintain or restore narrative coherence in the face of an ever-threatening, impending chaos at all levels" (p.91).

[57] In response to my interpretation of the moment in which the group worked on the castle, Owen said he thought this made sense (Field notes on conversation, March 13, 2008).

In that same moment, even though I was doing my best to negotiate with the group, it is possible that my efforts further added to the tension surrounding this instance. I did my utmost throughout the year not to be understood by the children as an authoritative figure; but, in that instance, I may have appeared as the authority. This was complicated for Owen because I was also his friend. Although Owen was unable to speak, he did not lift his hand. Unable to implement or express his ideas about the castle and his worry over his friendships with Charlie and, perhaps, with me left Owen in tears and speechless. This was a moment of extreme tension, and was one in which he needed help verbalizing his ideas as well as help negotiating with his group.

As Owen's eyes filled with tears, I, too, became speechless and I was uncertain about my next step. It was at this instance that Song arrived and I quickly departed to the other side of the room, allowing her and the children the space to sort this out. As I learned later, Song managed to coax out of Owen what the problem was. This took some time and Song's efforts were focused on Owen and his group. Owen finally explained he didn't like Taylor's idea because it wouldn't structurally work and he was concerned about the strength of the castle as a result. Song said she understood, but for his group he needed to explain what his reasons were for not agreeing (Field notes, February 26, 2007).

Song knew from working with Owen throughout the year that he found working in groups occasionally challenging. In encouraging Owen to explain himself, Song created the space for Owen to reveal what he was thinking to his group members. Her approach was focused upon Owen and the other children—not the minutes ticking by as the rest of the groups in the class carried on. During moments such as these, guiding

Owen to new understandings of how he could possibly communicate with his peers was something Song did with Owen throughout the school year.

Despite Song's guidance, Owen's stories to live by continued to bump into the other children and their stories to live by, something which I could observe inside the classroom more easily than outside of it. The playground, as noted earlier, seemed to be one of the places where Owen attempted to sustain his friendships, however, it, too, was not always tension free for Owen. Sometimes problems that erupted on the playground seeped back in to the in-classroom place (Huber, 1999) bringing Song and her ways of negotiating back into Owen's life.

> Song told Owen that she was not mad at him and asked if he blocked Liam's entrance into the classroom because he was afraid he would get in trouble with her. Owen put his head down and nodded. Song told Owen that it's her job to help them both and she was glad that she knew what had happened. Song asked him if she was able to help them and he nodded yes. She told Owen that it was important for him to express himself so others could understand what he was thinking. He nodded. Before going back to his desk, Song opened up her arms and gave Owen a great big hug and he smiled at her. He went back to his desk and immediately cheered up and was like that for the rest of the afternoon. The incident was not mentioned again by Liam or any of the other children. (Field notes, May 25, 2007)

In late May immediately after the lunch time recess, the calm of Song's classroom was broken by Liam storming in and shouting, "Owen strangled me, Owen strangled me." In Song's discussions with both of the boys, she learned from Owen that he had been trying to stop Liam from going in the wrong set of school doors by pulling on the hood of Liam's sweatshirt. Unfortunately, Liam continued to walk in the other direction, and was chocked by the pull of his sweater. Later when Liam tried to enter the classroom to tell Song, Owen blocked the doorway so that he could not get in.

The stories of the castle and of Liam add another layer of possible understanding about Owen as well as his relationship with Song. In moments of extreme tension, Owen relied on himself to solve the problem, action as opposed to words, as demonstrated by his hand in front of the castle and standing in front of the doorway. Owen's relationship with Song was important to him as noted by his unwillingness to let Liam into the room. Might Owen, in his attempts to block Liam's entrance, have been trying to prevent Song from hearing stories, which might conflict with stories he believed she had of him as being a good student? Might Owen also have been trying to prevent his friends from hearing stories of him, which might conflict with stories he believed and hoped they had of him in the classroom and on the playground as a good friend?

Without Song's attentiveness to the importance Owen placed upon friendships and the time and help Owen needed in order to express himself when he was upset, these situations may have remained unresolved. Song was aware of the friendship tensions Owen was experiencing as she reminded me of Owen's inquisitiveness in the fall and how, over time, he became seemingly more distracted by and attracted to his friends around him (Field notes, April 26, 2007). Despite this development, Song believed in Owen and his positive intentions. When Song was called upon to negotiate during these instances of group work/peer tension, periodically, Song spoke for Owen and encouraged his peers to see what Owen was possibly intending. Under her guidance and in relation with Song, Owen was able to sustain his understandings of himself and was perhaps beginning to learn that he did not have to solve problems on his own, a development which could allow him to also remain in relation with his friends.

"I'm Good at Reading": A Sustaining Thread in Owen's Stories to Live by

> Unlike [his sister], Owen did not have any homework—well maybe he had a little homework, but the homework Ms. Lee[58] gave were things he loved to do. Ms. Lee reminded the class to read lots over the weekend. Owen loves to read and when he heard Ms. Lee's reading reminder, he smiled to himself. Last week a new book order had arrived at school; Owen had ordered a lot of new books and many of them were action adventure stories. Depending on the story, Owen knows he can easily read 2 to 3 books in one weekend. (Excerpt from a fictional story (version 1) written for Owen; April 24, 2007)

During my early weeks in school, it was hard to imagine which of the children with whom I might work, trying to learn as I was, the classroom's daily routines and the ways I could be of help. In spite of the unfamiliarity surrounding me, one of the ways I began to notice Owen was the intensity with which he read during independent reading periods in the classroom. Perhaps, Owen's love of reading was what initially drew me to him for his understanding of himself as a reader reminded me of myself at his age.

In mid November while distributing a recently arrived book order from Scholastic Books, I was amazed by the purchases some of the children had made, particularly Owen. On his desk I placed a car model kit and 11 books. There was very little room to pile these purchases on his desk causing me to ask him about his interest in reading. He replied that they were "not hard books, just long" and that he could read each one very quickly because "I'm good at reading"[59] (Field notes, November 15, 2006).

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[58] Ms. Lee is the name of Owen's teacher, Song Lee.

During independent reading periods, unlike the other children in the class, Owen did not ask me to read with him. Preferring to read on his own, the books he chose were often novels, something which contrasted with many of his classmates and the picture books they liked to read. Over time he became known by his classmates as a reader and on one occasion one of Owen's friends, Hailey, informed me that Owen had already finished half of a book that contained 754 pages. Books kept Owen's attention and he was not easily distracted from a book he liked even when his friends were playing near by (Field notes, May 3, 2007). Over time, as I learned more about how Owen spent his time at home reading and not watching television, a decision made by Miso when they moved to the city (Field notes on conversation with Miso, December 14, 2006), I began to wonder if, for Owen, being a reader was one of the storylines which sustained him across the multiple landscapes he lived in and moved amid.

During our lunchtime conversations, books were one of the ways in which Owen and I came to know one another. On the first occasion we met for lunch, Owen brought a book entitled *The Navigator* (Field notes on conversation, March 5, 2007). This particular book Owen had brought for me to read and this lending of his books added another layer to our discussions. At times Owen would ask me what part of the book I was currently reading and, at other times, I would ask him questions about the characters and his thoughts about their motives. I would also ask him for a few clues about what would happen next in the book. Once I finished reading this first book, Owen quickly brought me another to read. This lending of books was also extended to his classmates as I noticed Lilly later in the year reading one of Owen's novels (Field notes, May 7, 2007). I was curious why Owen felt it was important that I read the books he particularly liked. He never did explicitly explain this to me. I believe that his knowledge of me, as someone who loved reading and who also read the books he liked, allowed us to develop a shared conversational interest away from focusing solely on him, something which, I think, made him feel uncomfortable at times. Lending his books as well may possibly have been a new way in which Owen was attempting to sustain his friendships.

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[59] As Miso and I talked about Owen's love of reading, she told me that she used to spend a lot of time, when he and Cho Hee were very young, reading books in English and Korean to each of them (Field notes on conversation, September, 27, 2007).

The opening field note is an excerpt from a fictional story I wrote for Owen. Writing the first draft of this fictional piece came about partially as a result of my conversations with Lilly and Dana since I was helping both of them create identity artifacts (a drawing and collage respectively) about themselves. I also wanted to do something with Owen that was particular to his interests and abilities. In order to write this story I drew from the multiple field texts I had gathered throughout the school year, field notes based upon my time in the classroom, about our lunch times together, as well as the transcripts of our recorded conversations. During this time I was also reading several dissertations, two of which inspired me to think about the possibilities to be found in fictional writing and narrative inquiry research (Murphy, 2004; Murray-Orr, 2005). The version of the story I later share is not solely my own work. Coached by Owen, it is also a result of the help I received from him as the story underwent several content changes, many of which were to clarify my understanding of him as a reader.

When I first suggested this story idea to Owen, I was ambitiously hoping that he and I might write the story together; but, feeling some doubt in his ability to do this, Owen declined and I did not press this aspect of the story project further with him. Instead over a two week period we developed a routine where I wrote a version of the story, he read it, and then he pointed out what he felt should be attended to in the story. After we discussed the story, I would then make the appropriate changes. Sometimes it took me several discussions before I understood what Owen wanted me to change. For example, Owen emphasized his ability to read thick books very quickly and he made a firm distinction between chapter books and picture books. (Field notes on conversations, April 26; May 3; May 3; May 9, 2007). These were points Owen repeatedly returned to and it took two more drafts before Owen felt the story was representing his reading ability correctly.

Initially, I was unaware of how writing a fictional story about Owen would open up new spaces for my thinking about him as well as for our conversations. Using the story and our editing changes as departure points, Owen began to talk more about himself as a reader and why he believed he was a good reader. Owen explained that reading and books were one of the reasons why he "got so smart" and where he received his inspiration as he felt he did not have "that much of an imagination" (Recorded conversation, April 26, 2007). Owen felt his reading skills were "really high" and have "been since ever I reached grade 1", but he was puzzled why his classmates did not have the same ability as himself "it doesn't really occur to me why other people—their reading is not really good" (Recorded in-class conversation, May 3, 2007). When asked why he thought his reading was as strong as it was, he explained it was "because I'm Korean." He also emphasized that he had "started reading books when I was in kindergarten" and how he "could even read 3 chapter books in 1 day in kindergarten...like really thick chapter books." He was proud to be known as a "bookworm" as it seemed to affirm for him a story in which he was a good reader who "really like[ed] books" (Recorded in-class conversation, May 3, 2007).

Our conversations about our story project caused me to wonder if for Owen his cultural identity was interwoven within his identity as a reader, as if the presence of one explained the development of the other. Owen explained his reading ability in relation to speed and book thickness. Reading was more than a hobby for Owen; it was something which gave him confidence in who he was, in and outside of school, knowledge that seemed to sustain him across multiple landscapes.

Set away from the parameters of the school building, the story is focused upon Owen and a magic book, a book which has deliberately chosen him for a particular task. With exception of the magic book and the "invention" project assigned by Song, the story is based upon events and people Owen and I discussed at various times throughout the year. As I wrote this story and its subsequent versions, I felt I became better acquainted with Owen in many ways. During this process further questions about Owen also arose, questions which have stayed with me as I wonder about Owen's future and the storylines he knows of himself as a reader, a learner, a son, a friend, a brother, a student, a Korean-Canadian boy…

A Story for Owen

It was a sunny Saturday morning and Owen was outside in his backyard jumping up and down on his new trampoline. As he jumped into the air he could feel a warm wind on his face and it reminded him that summer was coming. The remains of the moth which

Owen accidentally stepped on were no longer visible on the surface of the trampoline, thanks to an unexpected snowfall which had cleaned the surface of it. Owen, his sister, Cho Hee, and his cousins were all excited that it was warm again and that they could play outside. Owen loved how Cho Hee was able to jump really high and do a flip on the trampoline.

At the moment it was only Owen jumping on the trampoline. Cho Hee had homework to do and his cousins went to play inside leaving Owen outside by himself. Owen did not mind playing by himself at home. He did sometimes miss his friends at his old school, Tom and Bobby. He was still getting used to the city but he was glad that he was in Ms. Lee's[60] *class at school. He really liked his classmates and he was happy that he had made so many friends. He still remembers how nervous he was his first day of school at Streamside and how his stomach felt like there were butterflies flying around inside of him. That moment now seems so long ago...*

Unlike Cho Hee, Owen did not have any homework—well, maybe, he had a little homework, but the homework Ms. Lee gave were things he loved to do. Ms. Lee reminded the class to read lots over the weekend. Owen loves to read and when he heard Ms. Lee's reading reminder, he smiled to himself. Last week a new book order arrived at school. Owen had ordered a lot of new books and many of them were action adventure stories. Depending on the story, Owen knows he can easily read 10 chapter books in one weekend if he wants. Sometimes people call him "bookworm" because of the amount he is able to read. Spending time with books was one of Owen's favorite things to do and he thought it helped him think imaginatively.

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[60] As I wrote this story alongside Owen, I attempted to think about Song in the ways that Owen might. The correct thing to do, it seemed to me, was to refer to Song as Ms. Lee in the story in the ways that Owen did when he spoke about her with me.

The other piece of homework which Ms. Lee assigned was something which made Owen very excited. She asked the class to think about an object they would like to invent. Owen has thoughts about becoming an inventor and he felt like Ms. Lee read his mind with her request. There were many things he thought he might want to do some day like become a car designer, a banker, a scientist, or an author. He did change his mind frequently about this so he still was not sure and, at the moment, inventing something the world could use took up his imagination.

On the deck of the house lay the objects for Owen's invention: large pieces of aluminum foil and old toy parts. He was thinking about asking his mother to buy him some wire from a hardware store, but had not asked her just yet. Owen was hoping that he would be able to make something this weekend to show Ms. Lee and his friends at school on Monday. He was not quite sure yet what his invention might be. With this question in mind Owen climbed down from the trampoline. He was so busy thinking about possible inventions that he almost did not notice an unusual looking chapter book lying next to the aluminum foil. Unsure who the book belonged to Owen tried to pick the book up but fell forward with surprise as the weight of the book caused him to lose his balance. The book was larger than two encyclopedias stacked on top of one another and each page was thick like a piece of cardboard. Using both hands Owen opened the cover of the book to see what was written inside. The first page of the book shone brightly with its own inner light. Owen covered his eyes until they got used to the glare and he read the words

For those who wish to invent...read on....

The words on the page shimmered in the sun and Owen felt he could hear voices softly chanting this statement ever so softly aloud. The voices grew louder and Owen, with a sudden rush of panic, slammed the cover of the book. With the echo of the book closing shut ringing in his ears, Owen lifted his head to notice the dark clouds above him. What was this book and who had left it for him? *wondered Owen. Owen had his reasons for shutting the cover of the book, but he had not said them aloud since he was by himself. Once at school while Owen and his group were working on a project in class, Ms. Lee suggested to Owen to say his reasons out loud so that his friends could understand his reasons for wanting or not wanting to do something. Thinking back to that conversation with Ms. Lee, Owen wondered if he maybe he should say something aloud so that the book would understand why he shut its cover. Owen felt the book had a life of its own and it would understand if he spoke to it.*

Owen took a few minutes to think about what he could possibly say to the book. He knew he was unsure of himself and a little nervous of it, particularly when the chanting had started. He knew, however, that he wanted to read the book—just looking at its thick pages filled him with excitement. Perhaps, Owen thought, this might be something he could tell the book. Taking a deep breath Owen said aloud "I am very curious about you. I don't know why you've come and I would like to read you, but you make me uncomfortable—chanting and glowing and all that—no offence. So if you could just stay a little quiet, then I would feel more comfortable to begin reading you. I am also curious why did you choose me?" *Owen carefully opened the cover again to see new words, now written on the first page of the book.*

I chose you because of your ability to read amazingly well and I know you would like others to be able to do the same...

Owen smiled; he knew by learning how to help others to read as well as himself that this might be something he could use to help his classmates. Wait until he showed Ms. Lee and his friends at school on Monday the invention he had for them! *thought Owen. Owen began to quickly read, excitedly gulping down the pages in his haste to learn more.*

And this dear reader is only the beginning of Owen's reading adventures...

CHAPTER FIVE

Dana: Cautiously on the Move ~ Amid and Upon Multiple Landscapes

On the day of my first lunchtime conversation with Dana in late February of 2007 I was excited. Beneath my excitement, however, lay a sense of wariness. Although I had spent much time with Dana in the classroom, I was mindful that she might feel timid about talking with me away from the security of the in-classroom place. Dana's shyness was something I had become particularly wakeful to having observed her in the classroom and in the way she occasionally interacted with her classmates as well as with me. A week prior to our first lunchtime conversation, I had visited Dana's home to talk with her mother, Manar, about Manar's school experiences in Syria. While there conversing with her mother, Dana sat with us, but seemed hesitant to join in the conversation when I or her mother invited her, sometimes, in response to one of my questions, she spoke quietly in Arabic to her mother (Field notes on conversation, February 23, 2007). I was aware of the possibility that Dana's shyness might dominate our preliminary lunchtime conversation. Yet, this possibility did not douse the anticipation I felt, as my interest in Dana had begun some months prior to this particular day.

The day before I met Dana happened to be the day my curiosity about her was awakened. On September 27, 2006, as Song and I chatted after school, I heard briefly about Dana and how she had visited Syria that summer to see some of her relatives (Journal, September 30, 2006). The reason beneath my initial interest in Dana was, possibly, in relation to my own life experiences in Turkey, a geographic neighbor of Syria and the country of Dana's cultural heritage. Both countries are culturally, politically, and linguistically vastly different places, but this, I believe, was the slim link which initially connected us, a link which grew to become more about our relationship then about the places we knew. This change in our relationship, however, did not occur suddenly. It slowly came about as we grew to know one another in the classroom and in out-of-classroom places like the gymnasium and the playground (Field notes, October 5, 2006; March 5, 2007).

On my first day in Song's classroom, while chatting with her after school, I shared with her my initial impressions, particularly my surprise over the large number of children in her class. In response to my comment Song agreed that her class was rather large and emphasized that there were, in fact, two more children to meet, Dana and Liam. Liam was absent the day I arrived, but Dana was only now joining Song's class having been away visiting her grandparents in Syria throughout the summer. Song was confident I would meet Liam, but seemed uncertain about Dana and whether or not she would be coming to school (Journal, September 27, 2007). Despite her uncertainty, Song continued to prepare for Dana's arrival and after school was busily arranging desks into new groups. On this particular day, as the desks were reorganized, I noticed other preparations already in place for Dana. A small desk and chair were in position to join the new seating plan, and above one of the coat hooks in the back was Dana's name carefully printed on a label. Posted on a bulletin board, as well, near the doorway, was a sheet of paper entitled "star of the week" where each of the students' names, including Dana's, appeared (Journal, September 30, 2007).

The next day, Dana's first day in school, I arrived late and was unable to meet Dana prior to the beginning of class. Confused by the bus schedule and its various connections, I ended up walking into the room 15 minutes after the bell. By this time the class was already seated in the sharing area of the room and Song was in the process of asking the children questions about a book she was holding. The children were seated on the soft foam-like mats which covered this small area and were intently listening to Song. In my attempts not to further disrupt the class, I sat in the back, and, minutes later, noticed both Dana and Liam. Liam eyed me warily despite the smile of greeting I offered, but because of where I was seated I was unable to make eye contact with Dana, and could only observe the back of her head and her thick bobbed hair (Journal, September 30, 2007).

Fascinated with Dana's connection to Syria, I was curious to learn more and was happy to see that she was at school. During that same afternoon as I walked around the class helping the children make clay models of the earth, I had the opportunity to speak with Dana about her summer holidays. She told me that she had been to Syria for the summer to see her grandparents and that both of her parents were Syrian. I told her I lived in Turkey when not in Canada, and she responded by talking about how beautiful old Damascus is and that she thought her grandparents had visited Turkey at one time (Journal, September 30, 2006). As a result of our brief exchange, an exchange which I felt was a promising beginning, I found myself wondering more intensively about Dana and her life experiences.

How Dana might have been feeling these early days in grade 3 would be something I would return to over time as a way to stop and consider Dana upon the landscape of Song's classroom, a context previously unknown to Dana. Before joining Song's classroom, the emotions Dana may have possibly felt, reminded me of the day I arrived in Ankara and a time when I was wondering about whom I would meet and how they would come to know me.

Wondering about Dana

As the weeks passed and as I grew more comfortable in Song's classroom and with the daily routines which shaped it, many of the children began to seek my attention, particularly by asking me to read with them during silent reading after lunch (Field notes, October 12, 2006). Unlike some of the children who seemed anxious to have my company in full view of their classmates (Field notes, October 4, 2006), Dana, initially, was not as verbally forthright with me. Our in-classroom conversations were frequent, yet discrete. During these early weeks in school, Dana seemed to quietly prefer getting my attention while her classmates were preoccupied with other tasks (Field notes, October 19, 2006). Looking back I realize that the ways Dana and I spent time together, quiet exchanges in the classroom, walks about the playground, and being partners in gym, were some of the ways in which she and I grew to know one another (Field notes October 5, 2006, October 19, 2006, March 19, 2007).

The early reserve Dana sometimes displayed on an individual basis did not extend to the ways she participated throughout the year. This I particularly observed as she worked on her own, in small groups with her classmates, or as a vigorous participant in gym class (Field notes, October 5, 2006; November 15, 2006; April 23, 2007; April 25, 2007). Aware of Dana's tendency to passively participate during class discussions, Song often tried to get Dana more verbally active by interweaving questions, which she knew related to Dana's life experiences, into regular classroom activities. On one particular day while the class was reviewing vocabulary/spelling words, words composed of 'ast', as part of their social studies lesson, she asked the class if anyone knew another meaning for the word "fast". In reply to Song's question, Dana volunteered and proceeded to explain that the additional meaning of the word referred to the action of someone "not like eat[ing] for a while" (Recorded conversation with Song, December 11, 2006). Song explained to Jean Clandinin and me that one of Dana's classmates, Liam, in response to Dana's answer, added that fasting was a practice his father also did, but, Liam explained, he was "too young to fast right now" (Recorded conversation with Song, December 11, 2006). Although Dana nodded in agreement to Liam's response, she did not share with the class that she had fasted on a few occasions during the month of Ramadan. When I mentioned this to Song, she replied "I'm not surprised that she [Dana] didn't respond because she's not one to. She doesn't openly as much share her culture" (Recorded conversation, December 11, 2006).

When Dana and I began to have lunchtime conversations later during the months of March and April, I learned that Dana was aware of her own timidity. When I asked why she did not "raise [her] hand" during class discussions, she said she knew she "should raise [her] hand more, but explained "it's because I'm shy sometimes" (Recorded conversation, April 16, 2007). I asked further questions about the reasons beneath her shyness. Dana seemed to find it difficult to elaborate upon the ways she felt during moments when the entire class was participating in a conversation (Field notes on conversation, April 16, 2007).

Dana's hesitancy to express her opinions, particularly during entire class discussions, was not something I was fully awake to throughout my early weeks in the classroom. It was only when I began to attend to my own feelings of surprise in response to Dana's participation during particular discussions that I become wakeful to the multiple prior moments in which she had not spoken (Field notes, November 6, 2006). Becoming wakeful to Dana in this way, I began to listen more carefully during those moments she did contribute to class discussions. At times, it seemed to me, she hesitated to share answers causing me to wonder why she sometimes did this.

One afternoon in class as Song led a discussion in relation to a book they were reading, she asked the class if anyone had ever experienced homesickness before, much like the character they were reading about. A few of the children raised their hands and shared brief stories. Dana did not become involved during this discussion although she seemed to pay attention. Following this dialogue, Song raised another question and asked the class what some of them did to make themselves feel better when they felt homesick. The suggestions from the children ranged from the serious to the playful. In amongst the children's answers was Dana's who said plainly that in these types of moments, she just tried to "forget about it" (Field notes, December 11, 2006).

Dana's infrequent involvement during whole class discussions was not the only thing which seemed to be a challenge for her. There were also moments when Dana seemed uncomfortable interacting with her peers. During these awkward moments, Dana had a tendency to stay quiet and not offer an explanation for her actions.

In early October, approximately two weeks after Dana's arrival to the class, Song distributed samples of each child's school photographs taken a week earlier. She reminded them that if their parents wanted copies of the photos, they would have to take the order form home. The children excitedly received their photograph and quickly took the sample out of the bag to show their desk mates[61]. Dana's group at that time consisted of three of her classmates, 2 girls and 1 boy. Dana seemed quite willing to share her sample photo with Grace and Paige, the girls in her group, but seemed hesitant about interacting with Nathan. Grace, Paige, and Nathan had shared their photos with one another, but Dana had not joined in. When Nathan asked to see Dana's photograph, shoving his own picture onto her desk as a way to get her attention, she ignored him and pretended that she hadn't heard him. Dana carefully placed the photograph back inside its protective cover as Nathan watched, seeming confused, he finally took his own photo off her desk[62] (Field notes, October, 12, 2006).

In this particular photograph, Dana is seated with her brother, Amar. Amar also attended Streamside School and was in kindergarten at that time. In the photograph, the two of them are seated closely together and are smiling happily at the camera. They resemble one another with the exception of the eyeglasses Amar wore. The image they project in the picture is one of happiness and there was nothing I could discern that seemed troublesome, making me curious as to why Dana did not share it with her classmate after having done so with two of the others. Perhaps, Dana was focused on listening to Song and had not heard Nathan's request? There is also the possibility that because Dana was still relatively new to the classroom, she was unsure of Nathan's intention as his inquisitive nature did occasionally bubble over into loud comments or multiple questions. Perhaps, Dana was concerned that her photograph would be a source of interest for Nathan and that he might begin asking questions about her brother and his eyeglasses, questions, which, at that time, she might not have been prepared to answer.

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[61] The seating plan in Song's classroom changed frequently throughout the year. Sometimes Song organized where and with whom the children would sit and at other times the children designed the plan themselves. The plan was often based upon small clusters of 3-5 desks positioned closely together.

[62] In conversation with Dana while we discussed the draft of this chapter she emphasized to me that this moment with Nathan was not an instance she remembered. Dana suggested it was possible she simply had not heard his request (Field notes on conversation, October 4, 2007).

In conversation with Song and Jean Clandinin, a conversation which took place early in the study, I expressed my doubts about the possibility of having conversations with Dana outside of the classroom as she seemed “really hesitant to talk” (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2006). As we three discussed the concerns I had raised, Song offered what she knew of Dana, pieces of information emphasizing what was largely not known about her. Based upon Dana’s late arrival at the beginning of the school year and the shyness she occasionally demonstrated, I had assumed Dana was a new student to Streamside School. It was a surprise, then, to learn from Song that Dana had arrived at Streamside in December of 2005 from a small city located in the mid-western United States. During the previous school year Song taught grade two physical education as part of her teaching schedule and had already met Dana as a result. In response to my question about how long Dana and her family had been living in the neighborhood where Streamside School was located, Song was unsure. She explained that Dana “has been gone a lot—she’s hardly been here actually” because she “came in at Christmas time [the year before]” and in the second half of the year Dana “missed the last reporting period [of grade 2] by about a month and a half” (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2006).

The reasons beneath Dana’s sudden arrival and departure in grade 2 were not very clear, emphasizing why possibly Song felt, weeks earlier, uncertain about whether or not Dana would be joining her class in September. This situation was complicated by the lateness of Dana’s arrival since Song didn’t think she “was coming anymore and the day before Dana arrived [Dana's parents] came in to tell me…that Dana was back." (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2006).

Dana's Story About First Days of School

Later in the school year during our initial lunchtime conversation in February, Dana shared her first day school experiences in different schools. This came up while we discussed the time/lifeline she had created in class two months earlier. As I had spoken with her mother a week earlier in a conversation, I felt fairly comfortable with some of Dana's background, but I wanted to confirm with Dana the number of schools she attended in the United States before Streamside. Dana explained one school had been for kindergarten only and the second school was where she attended grade 1 and part of grade 2 before moving to Canada (Field notes on conversation, February 26, 2007).

Our conversation continued to unfold and as I read aloud bits and pieces of her time/lifeline I noted one particular sentence in which she had written "First day of school in Kindergarten" (Dana's time/lifeline, December 20, 2006). This prompted me to ask her about that first day of school. I was hoping my line of conversation would trigger particular memories for Dana, so I was surprised by how she spoke generally about all of her first days in school.

Dana: Well. Every time when I have a first day of school

Jen: Yes.

Dana: I feel really, really shy.

Jen: Oohh.

Dana: So I don't really talk much or like that…

Jen: Yeah.

Dana: Or at recess I don't [stay still], just, I just walk around.

Jen: Right. Stay moving.

Dana: Yeah that's [usually my] first day. (Recorded conversation, February 26, 2007)

From Dana's response it became clear that Dana had experienced many first days in new schools. Before arriving at Streamside School she attended two different schools in the United States. In December of 2005 she began grade 2 at Streamside School and in the summer of 2006 she attended a school in Syria. By the time Dana started grade 3 at Streamside School at the end of September in 2006, she had a total of 3 years of schooling experienced in 4 different schools in combination with 6 "first" days of school. Dana also emphasized that during these first days she generally did not "talk much" and at recess she usually just "walks around." In light of our conversation in which Dana described herself as someone who feels "really, really shy" on her first day of school, it does seem possible that joining Song's classroom at the end of September caused complications for Dana, joining as she was, a group who had been in school for nearly a month.

Months prior to this first conversation with Dana, Jean Clandinin, Song and I discussed why possibly Dana was "really hesitant to talk" (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2006). Song described Dana's attempts at making her all-about-me folder, an activity which started some weeks prior to Dana's arrival. Song explained that many of the children brought in items representative of "pop culture, media…pictures of family" for their all-about-me folders. Also available in the classroom for the children's use were "a whole bunch of magazines" (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2006). Yet, despite the examples provided by Dana's classmates and the availability of materials in the classroom, Dana "didn't like anything there…she said there's nothing in there that she liked" which resulted in Dana not having "very much in her all-about-me [folder] at all" (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2006).

Song's description of Dana's struggle to make an all-about-me folder during our conversation in October was something I often returned to when thinking about Dana. As Song noted, this particular activity was almost completed by the time Dana had joined the class. Although there were still 1 or 2 days left for Dana to try and make one, this proved to not be the case as Dana had trouble finding items for her folder from available materials. Thinking about Dana's all-about-me folder and the struggle she had with it, I was anxious to learn more about Dana's impressions of her first days in Song's classroom.

During our first conversation Dana explained that the first day I met her was actually her second day at school. She explained that she had visited the school the previous day so that she could "see the classroom", but when she arrived she "was so shy [she] didn't want to go in" (Recorded conversation, February 26, 2007). Dana explained that because "everyone was looking at me—I was so shy I just hid behind my mom and dad." When her parents asked her if she wanted to go in the room, she said "nope" because she "was shy" even though she "really remember[ed] [Ms. Lee] because she used to teach us at the gym" and that this had made her "happy" and feel "better." Although the next day at school "was better" for Dana, she felt "really shy still" and she "didn't play with anyone." Dana explained her shyness by stating "I don't know why but it takes me [a] long [time] to get used to different friends" (Recorded conversation, February 26, 2007).

Thinking about Dana and her first days of school and the "shyness" she felt in relation to her struggle to compose an all-about-me folder makes me speculate further. I wonder now about the possibility of other alternatives beneath Dana's intentions as she ignored Nathan's request to show her photograph. I am also drawn to temporal considerations and the time of the year in which these moments occurred. It is Dana's early moments in the school year that led me to consider the tensions Dana was experiencing as she tried to understand who she could be in this new classroom landscape, tensions which make me consider Dana's home and previous school contexts.

Attending to In-Classroom Bumping Places

In a conversation with Dana's mother, Manar, I learned that, like in Turkey, Islam is the religion most widely practiced in Syria although its daily influence differs from Turkey's understanding of religion, culturally and politically. Based upon my experiences in Turkey, and my general understandings of Islam, I was drawn to Manar's description of her faith and its importance to her and her family (Field notes on conversation, March 7, 2007). During this same conversation, I also noted the influence religious beliefs seemed to have within Syrian schools (Field notes on conversation, March 7, 2007), as their presence in educational institutions was not something I had experienced in Turkey due to the country's upholding of a political system based upon secularism.

As Manar reflected upon her early school experiences she described schools as places where boys and girls were "separated" into different classrooms. This particular distinction she did emphasize, however, has recently changed so that in "some schools [in Syria]…like in the elementary school…until like…the third grade—they might be like combined—but after that they're separated" (Recorded conversation, March 7, 2007). I also learned, in a previous conversation, that the summer before Dana began grade 3 at Streamside School, she attended a school in Syria. Manar explained that she wanted her children to feel more comfortable in Arabic as she was concerned their writing and reading skills were not as strong as their ability to speak the language as "you know it's hard to teach…your [own] children" (Recorded conversation, February 21, 2007). Her concern over their acquisition of the language[63] was also connected to the importance she placed upon their practice as Muslims because "when they can like open the Koran and read it by themselves—it's very important" (Recorded conversation, February 21, 2007).

Laying these conversational moments with Dana's mother alongside Dana's reluctance to share her school photograph with Nathan allows me to consider a new possibility in that moment between Dana and her classmate. Having been in Syria visiting her relatives and attending school for some months, Dana was, in early October, a relatively new student to Song's classroom and was possibly still remembering the rules of another classroom landscape. That landscape, according to Manar, was shaped by "rules everywhere" and for Dana "that's what [Dana] didn't like" (Recorded conversation, February 21, 2007). Speculating about the rules which may possibly have been in place at Dana's school in the summer, I do wonder if Dana's classroom was composed entirely of girls. On the other hand, if her classroom was, in Manar's words, a "combined" room of boys and girls, what expectations were in place in terms of how girls and boys behaved together? According to Manar, schools in Syria are "different than here" (Recorded conversation, February 21, 2007) and this possibly may have added to how Dana felt as she attempted to ignore Nathan's request to see her school photograph[64]. As I reflect upon the conversations I had with Manar and the possibilities underlying this one in-classroom moment for Dana, I am reminded of other early moments in relation to Dana where she quietly defined herself.

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[63] In September, 2007, I learned from Manar that she and her husband had enrolled Dana and Amar at a new school, a school which focused upon instruction in Arabic and English (Field notes on conversation, September 24, 2007). In March, 2008, as Manar and I discussed Dana's language skills in Arabic, Manar told me she was really happy with Dana's speaking, reading, and writing progress. Manar seemed to think Dana's rapid improvement was due to the daily instruction Dana received in Arabic as well as her grade 4 teacher (Field notes on conversation, March 20, 2008).

In early October, during Ramadan, Song confirmed that Dana was Muslim, something which I had anticipated. One afternoon on the playground during the recess break as I walked about with Song while she was on supervision, Dana and one of Dana's classmates, Mya, came and joined us. Dana was very talkative and, prompted by Song's questions, Dana shared with us the rituals of fasting and explained at what time she and her family ate in the evenings and early mornings (Field notes, October 5, 2006). I was initially surprised to hear that Dana was fasting simply because of my own experiences in Turkey and the tendency of many families to not encourage their young children to fast. Dana's decision to fast, I later learned, was due to her own desire to try it and Manar had agreed with her request. Dana did not fast every day throughout Ramadan and only occasionally took part. I was struck by the importance, however, that Dana, seemed to place upon being Muslim as seen through her willingness to fast during the religious month of Ramadan[65].

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[64] Manar said she thought my interpretation of this moment, between Dana and Nathan, was a possibility in how Dana might have been feeling (Field notes on conversation, October 4, 2007).

[65] In the fall, 2007, during my visit to Canada to share with the families early drafts of my writing, it was Ramadan. As Dana and Manar discussed fasting and Dana's decision to try it one year earlier, Dana informed me she was now regularly fasting. Manar emphasized that Dana's decision to fast daily during Ramadan, 2007, was a decision made by Dana (Field notes on conversation, October 4, 2007).

Despite Dana's occasional shyness, when asked questions about her religion, she would offer answers and enter into dialogue. At the beginning of the year, volunteering information about herself as a Muslim to the class did not occur although she would make an effort on an individual basis. A few weeks after the moment on the playground when Dana had talked about fasting, Dana informed me that she would not be in school the following week as she and her family were going to Illinois to be with friends. I replied that I knew next week was the holiday following Ramadan[66] as my family in Turkey would also be celebrating and that I would be thinking of her with her family and relatives (Field notes, October 19, 2006).

Although I am not Muslim, my connection to a country whose majority are Muslims seemed to be, for Dana, something which perhaps, initially, strengthened our relationship. Throughout the year, it appeared she felt comfortable explaining to me things in relation (Field notes, February 26, 2007) to her religious faith, particularly when they were circumstances, she understood, as outside of her practices as a Muslim. This was not something I had expected and the tensions Dana seemed to feel around these types of moments were particularly emphasized in the fall as Dana's stories to live by bumped into holidays and celebrations the school calendar acknowledged.

On the morning of Halloween as I helped Song prepare for the afternoon's activities, I noted the general excitement hanging in the air as some of the children arrived with their hair done or their faces made up in preparation for the afternoon's costume party. As trays of food and drink were brought into the classroom by volunteering parents and prizes for the games were stored safely away until the afternoon,

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[66] In October, 2007, Dana told me that, she, her grade 4 teacher and classmates were going to have an "Eid party" once Ramadan was over (Field notes on conversation, October 4, 2007).

I saw Dana arrive. From the size of her backpack it seemed to me there was nothing inside but books. When Dana saw me, she started off our conversation by stating she had not brought a costume because she did not celebrate Halloween. I told her that while I was in Turkey I did not necessarily celebrate Halloween, but in different places I did do different things. I was not sure if she understood what I meant and nervous that she might feel uncomfortable with what I said I joked about the candy being the best part of the day. In response to my comment she laughed. Later in the morning not celebrating Halloween was, possibly, emphasized again for Dana with the arrival of the kindergarten class and their costume parade. Dana's younger brother, Amar, whom I recognized from the school photograph a few weeks earlier, was in the back of the costume line and he was not dressed up either (Field notes, October 31, 2006).

On October 31st I was fascinated by Dana's comments that she did not celebrate Halloween, but I understood her comment as a sign of her confidence in what she did celebrate. I was worried that she might feel like she was on her own, but, in some ways, I assumed she had experienced this before in her previous schools in the United States. It is probable that what I was not taking into consideration was the possibility that Dana's previous schools were composed of large Muslim communities and, therefore, in her classroom there were many children like herself who did not partake in these events. Also to be considered is Dana's uncertainty, as seen in her haste to inform me that she had not brought a costume, uncertainty which, perhaps, was more focused upon how her classmates might react to Dana's decision not to dress up. Although I picked up on the tensions Dana seemed to be feeling around moments such as these, I had them more firmly aligned with how not celebrating such events might make her feel different. I did not consider that, at that time, Dana's tensions may also have been related to her classroom landscape, a context composed of multiple languages, cultures, and religions[67].

Becoming Wakeful to Dana's Early Negotiations on a Diverse Classroom Landscape

In late September on the first day Dana and I met, as we discussed places in the world we both knew, our conversation attracted some of Dana's new classmates and we were soon joined by two children, Hailey and Liam. In the following field note I attempted to capture the complexity of the moment.

> Hailey asked me if I knew she's Chinese. She went on to say that she was born in Canada and that her dad is Chinese, but that he wants Hailey to know she's also Chinese which makes her Chinese-Canadian. Liam informed us he's Pakistani-Canadian, as his father is Pakistani, and Dana stated that she is Syrian-American. When I questioned her…do you mean Syrian-Canadian? She smiled and said "Yes, Syrian-American." They then looked at me and I said "O—what am I? I guess I am Scottish-Canadian." (Field notes, September 28, 2006)

Reflecting upon this instant I am struck by how our small group was attempting to negotiate who we all were by the identifiers we attached to ourselves. Considering Dana had only arrived that day, having spent her summer in Syria with her relatives while also attending school, I wonder how she felt during this brief exchange with Hailey, Liam, and me. We three were examples of the different cultural heritages, religions and languages which composed Song's classroom and was perhaps far different in terms of diversity than the school Dana had just attended in Syria.

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[67] In conversation with Manar while discussing the draft of the chapter written about Dana, Manar pointed out to me that some of Dana's tensions at the beginning of the school year may also have been due to the fact that Dana speaks mostly Arabic at home. Manar explained that Dana's shyness may, possibly, have been due to language. During this same discussion, Manar emphasized to me the importance her and her family place upon honoring and respecting all faiths and cultures. I explained to Manar that I understood Dana's shyness as a result of her desire to be respectful to all of the individuals which composed her diverse classroom. I suggested that, perhaps, because of the classroom's diversity, Dana was shy as she strove to understand herself in relation with her classmates (Field notes on conversation, October 4, 2007).

Dana's concern for how she interacted with her classmates was a point which came up in one of our later lunchtime conversations during the school year. In class we had read the picture book *The Name Jar* (Choi, 2003), a story which depicts the experiences of Unhei, a young Korean girl who has recently immigrated to the United States with her family. During Unhei's initial weeks in her new school, she debates whether or not to adopt an American name in addition to her Korean name so that her classmates would be able to say her name more easily. Her peers attempt to help by suggesting new names for Unhei and they collect their suggestions in a large glass jar. Over time and with the help of her mother, a neighbour, and a classmate, Unhei eventually decides to keep her Korean name and, at the end of the book, introduces herself to her classmates as Unhei. This picture book was particularly loved by the children in Song's class and after we read and discussed it, some of the children asked their classmates to begin calling them by their additional names (Field notes, April 19, 2007).

During our conversation in relation to this story I was curious about Dana's thoughts and asked if she had liked the book. Dana said she liked it, but was concerned that "now we're not calling some people's names anymore" and "now [that] we have to call those names…I don't know…what [do we do] if we forget?" (Recorded conversation, April 23, 2007). I reminded Dana of Song's advice to the class, and that if she forgot a classmate's name, she could explain to her friend that she had forgotten. I am not sure if Dana was reassured by my explanation for I did not dwell upon this particular point and moved the conversation to another topic. It is only now when I lay her concern alongside that moment with Hailey and Liam from her first day of school that I begin to see the complexities this classroom landscape was for Dana as she attempted to respect the differences present in her classroom.

On November 6, 2006, a week after Halloween, an opportunity for Dana to explain to her classmates why she did not celebrate Halloween arose. At the start of November, Song and the children were beginning to wind down their science unit on rocks and minerals. A few weeks earlier in connection to science I mentioned to Song that I could do a brief power point presentation about Cappadocia, a region in Turkey known for its volcanic rock formations as a result of the powerful winds in the area. I was interested in the children's reactions to the photographs, but I was also hopeful that the images in a different geographic setting might encourage the children to speak of the places they knew in the world.

> I started off by showing where Turkey was on the map and explained that this was an area of Turkey that had been covered in volcanic ash by two volcanoes which were now dormant. The students seemed to be interested in the photos and asked me lots of questions. I explained that this area in Turkey is known for its ancient churches although Turkey is actually a Muslim country and that my stepson, Bartu, and my husband, Erhan, were also Muslim. Dana was seated right in front of me and after I said this, she excitedly straightened up, sat tall, and while raising her hand she said loudly "I'm Muslim." (Field notes, November 6, 2006)

Dana's reaction to the presentation surprised me. In that moment I had not asked a question, but was making general statements in relation to what I knew of their science unit while I attempted to emphasize what made the country different from Canada in terms of its geographic location. I had not planned on talking about religion. Upon reflection, I believe this may have occurred as I pointed out an ancient church in one of the photographs and, in reaction to my own statement, I tried to balance this by pointing out how present day Turkey is religiously different than its past.

Admittedly, I was hoping for reactions from the students, but Dana's immediate reply astonished me and I found myself anxious to hear more of her questions for she raised her hand frequently throughout the presentation. Earlier in the afternoon before this occurred I had witnessed Dana passively working in a group as they brainstormed past and present uses of rocks and minerals. She seemed hesitant to share her answers and was quiet while the children talked around her (Field notes, November 6, 2006). In contrast to this was her physical response during the presentation later on, a moment in which she sat up tall to announce that she was Muslim. As previously noted, during the initial weeks of Dana's time in Song's classroom, I had observed her tendency to withdraw from whole class discussions and attend to them passively. Her reaction and defining self-statement were noticeable contrasts to what I had observed in previous weeks (Field notes, November 6, 2006).

Thinking about Dana in November, a moment which distinguishes itself strongly with other moments, makes me wonder about the tensions I saw Dana as experiencing when she first arrived in September. These were tensions that were challenging for her to express and, I think, present, at times, throughout the year as she attempted to understand herself and her peers during their curriculum making. I began to learn more about these tensions, during our lunchtime conversations, particularly when she talked about her struggle with making her all-about-me folder at the beginning of school year. This contrasted with the joy she seemed to exhibit while talking about her family and being a big sister. These conversations opened up opportunities for Dana and me to imagine how we might create a new all-about-Dana folder that was more representative of her. Our conversations in an out-of-classroom place about her family, her previous school experiences, and her new all-about-Dana folder, in turn, seemed to enter back into the classroom as Dana gradually began to share more of herself with her classmates.

Exploring the Beginnings of Dana's All-About-Dana Folder

Prior to the conversations Dana and I had about her all-about-me folder, I was hopeful that we would discuss her reasons for why it particularly seemed to bother her. As Dana did not seem comfortable entering into exchanges which she interpreted as possibly tension-filled, I was curious why this particular folder, something I viewed as innocuous, instigated such a negative reaction from her. Initially, I wondered if there was an experience associated with the making of the folder, something which had occurred during her first days in Song's classroom, and I thought that perhaps discussing the reasons beneath her dislike would bring this moment to light (Field notes on conversation, March 12, 2007). Yet, Dana's rationale for not liking the folder was complex and could not be located within the happenstance of a negative in-classroom incident. Understanding Dana's discomfort with her all-about-me folder occurred gradually while we developed her new folder and in relation to the conversations we had about her family and previous school experiences.

On the day of our second conversation, once inside the room in which we talked, I realized that I had left Dana's all-about-me folder in the classroom and asked Dana if she would mind going back to the class to get it. I explained to her that I was hesitant to return to the room, as I knew it was possible some of her classmates would ask me to have lunch with them and I did not want to risk the possibility of hurting someone's feelings by saying no. In response to my request Dana said she would go and get the folder, but she also reminded me that she did not like the folder although she knew we were going to talk about it (Field notes on conversation, March 12, 2007).

Dana's strong feelings about her folder had been revealed on different occasions throughout the fall. These comments, however, were made in passing and were not explored in any detailed discussions. At the end of our first lunchtime conversation, I mentioned to Dana that in our next conversation I was interested in discussing with her the all-about-me folder she made in class at the beginning of the year. In response to my comment a look of distaste quickly crossed Dana's face making me temporarily wonder if I had introduced some tension between us (Field notes on conversation, February 26, 2007). In response to Dana's vigorous reaction, albeit non-verbal, to her folder, I found myself suggesting alternative possibilities as a way to smooth things over between us. In this awkward moment I proposed "maybe we could add things to [the folder] and make it into something you like" (Recorded conversation, February 26, 2007). My suggestion to alter Dana's folder was made in the tension of the moment. Had I thought of this prior to my conversation with Dana, I would have talked about the possibility of making changes to Dana's all-about-me folder with Song, as a way to gauge Song's feelings about it. Despite the impromptu nature of my proposal, Dana seemed to like it and explained that in addition to adding things to the folder she "want[ed] to take some things off" so as to make it "better" (Recorded conversation, February 26, 2007). Dana also pointed out that the folder was laminated and was curious how we might remove pictures as a result. I suggested we could "cover things up" and Dana quickly replied that she would like to do this "with different things" (Recorded conversation, February 26, 2007). That evening, after Dana and I had talked, I wrote an e-mail to Song and explained what transpired in our conversation. Song responded quickly and wrote "I love the idea of having [Dana] add to her all-about-me folder, a list or pictures. She was positively glowing after your lunch meeting today" (E-mail correspondence from Song, February 26, 2007). In our next conversation, I was quick to share Song's response with Dana and it was with this freedom that Dana and I continued to discuss her new all-about-Dana folder[68].

Although I knew of Dana's dislike for her folder well before our initial lunchtime conversation, her discomfort with it was not why I purposely chose to use it as a departure point for our discussions. Based upon the premise that the folders were identity artifacts individually created by the children on the in-classroom landscape, I felt it was important to discuss the folders with all three of the children. In spite of my efforts to prepare Dana for our initial discussions about her folder, it seemed this had not lessened her feelings of discomfort. My concerns caused me to be cautious; I was more interested in Dana discussing something of her own volition as opposed to feeling like she had to "please" me and tell me something she thought I wanted to hear (Field notes on conversation, March 12, 2007).

On the day of our second conversation, I was secure that all bases had been covered, yet tension surrounding this topic entered into the room once Dana arrived back from the classroom with her old all-about-me folder in her hands. Once inside the room,

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[68] In September, 2007, while discussing my interest in the events around Dana's all-about-me folder, Manar suggested that, perhaps, because Dana understood I cared for her, "[Dana] found it easier to make the new folder" (Field notes on conversation, September 24, 2007).

Dana quickly placed the folder face down on the table in front of me so that the collage pasted on the front of it could not be seen. She emphatically announced again, before I had an opportunity to turn on the recorder, that she did not like the folder. I was startled by the loudness of her voice, for, up until that very moment, I had never heard Dana speak with such volume (Field notes on conversation, March 12, 2007).

Unlike some of her classmates' highly decorated all-about-me folders where both sides were completely covered with family photographs, animation images, sports team logos, favorite animal pictures, and the occasional sticker, Dana's folder had more empty space than illustrations. On the front of Dana's folder there were only 8 pictures and there were no photographs. The images appeared to be stuck haphazardly on one side of the folder and although her name was written in the top right hand corner, I was not sure who actually wrote her name as it did not resemble her printing. Each picture was a cut out from a magazine. There were five pictures of food: a chocolate cake, a bowl of spaghetti, a bowl of ice cream, a bunch of broccoli, and a roasted turkey. Two other pictures depicted a DVD cover of Walt Disney's animated film *The Little Mermaid* (1989) and a picture of a bouquet of flowers. The final picture of the eight was torn and only one quarter of it remained. This small piece displayed what appeared to be the large tail of a fish surrounded by tiny twinkling stars. The impression the folder gave was unsettling for quite in contrast with the way I had come to know Dana, the collage which appeared on the folder's surface suggested she had not cared about the task during its construction (Field notes on conversation, March 12, 2007).

Temporal Considerations in Relation to Dana's All-About-Me Folder

As a way to begin our conversation around this sensitive topic I decided to begin gradually and asked Dana to remind me when the folder was made. Dana explained that her classmates had begun making the folders at the beginning of the school year and that because she "came late…they had a lot more things on [their folders] than me" (Recorded conversation, March 12, 2007). Moments later she said again that her peers had "a lot more things on them [their folders] than me" and that most of her classmates' folders were "finished" making her feel like she had very little time to make one properly resulting in her "not add[ing] a lot of things". Although it seemed Dana was bothered by the fact that she had arrived late resulting in her having less time to find and paste images to the collage of her folder, when I asked her if this was why she did not like the folder she replied "I just…don't know, I just don't like it that much" (Recorded conversation, March 12, 2007).

As our conversation continued, Dana's feelings about why she did "not like [the folder] that much" were not clarified. At the time I did wonder if Dana was having difficulty expressing herself as her reasons were complicated or if she was resisting entering into the tension our discussion might initiate. Picking up on the images pasted on the surface of the folder, I began to ask questions about them to see if any of pictures might help her recall a particular memory or have a particular reason for being chosen. I began by asking about the picture of the turkey and asked if it was one of her favorite foods. There was some momentary hesitation in Dana's response and I tried again, rephrasing my question about the turkey in relation to the other foods represented in the collage. Dana vaguely responded "yeah, [I like it] a little"; her comment was followed by a little pause before she suddenly added "I just put it on" (Recorded conversation, March 12, 2007). I asked if the picture of the turkey was used to fill up some of the space on the folder to which Dana quickly replied "yeah" and pointed to the ice cream and cake pictures as images which also fell into this space-filling category. Admittedly, the beginning of our conversation was slow moving as Dana seemed hesitant to expand upon her answers. In terms of our individual conversations this was quite unlike Dana, for the majority of the time she seemed to enjoy speaking with me and often directed the conversations herself (Field notes on conversation, March 19, 2007).

Interpreting Dana's concise answers as a sign she did not want to elaborate upon her responses, I shifted our focus on to the period of time in which the folder was created, and directly asked Dana if making the folder was difficult considering she had only just arrived at the end of September. The awkwardness seemed to pass and Dana began to relax making me wonder if my comment had given her new ways to look at her folder and the time it was made, a time when she felt, perhaps, uncertain of how to complete something her classmates had nearly finished. Dana said it was hard to make the folder, but she did not go into much detail about why she felt this way. Instead her focus was more upon the work her classmates had completed on their folders in relation to the empty space on hers. Dana explained that one of her classmate's folders had "even the back" filled with images and that "it wasn't like mine" because "pictures…were like glued together and it was filled, filled—all of it was filled. You c[ouldn't] see a tiny bit of [the folder's surface]…not even a tiny dot, it was all filled"[69]. I asked about the types of things pasted on their folders and Dana emphasized "the real pictures [photographs]" some of the children had used and how she did not want to add photographs to hers "because you'd have to cut [them] up" (Recorded conversation, March 12, 2007).

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[69] In September, 2007, as I discussed this moment with Dana and Manar, Dana excitedly described to her mother, her former classmates' all-about-me folders and how full they had been of pictures. Dana emphasized her first effort at a folder had been very different than her peers' (Field notes on conversation, September 24, 2007).

In response to some of Dana's comments I pointed out to her again that I thought the timing of her arrival also complicated the difficulty of the task she was attempting to do. When asked directly about her folder, there seemed to be some uncertainty in the responses Dana gave, particularly when I asked her about her reasons for choosing the pictures she did. Dana's analysis of her own folder occurred when she began to speak about it in relation to her classmates and how hers was different from theirs, especially in the ways her peers' folders were all "filled." This adjective Dana used repeatedly throughout our conversation. Dana's use of the word "filled" to describe her classmates' folders makes me wonder if a "filled" folder was an indicator of something particularly important for Dana as she did make an effort to fill in some of the space on her folder with a few pictures she did not particularly like. Perhaps, if I had asked Dana why she thought a "filled" folder was important she might have talked about the importance of doing well in school and/or impressing her new teacher, Ms. Lee or, possibly, she might have replied with "I just don't know" or perhaps their folders "w[ere]n't like mine" because they were all "filled." Then again, perhaps, Dana's uncertainty during this period of time was more related to her being in a new context as opposed to her actual folder, a place in which she did not have established relationships making her feel vulnerable in the process about what to share about herself. I believe Dana's folder exemplifies the uncertainty she felt at that time and perhaps if this same activity had been done at another time of the year, it would have been completed to her satisfaction.

Temporally considering Dana's first folder was something I returned to frequently, particularly when she and her classmates became involved in a class project about citizenship education, a project which Dana actively participated in. At the beginning of the project many of the children found it difficult to discuss themselves and their experiences with great insight. As a way to assist the children in thinking abstractly about the project's underlying theme of belonging, a series of picture books were chosen to assist with this process. Beginning in late February and continuing until the end of the school year, each week project tasks were introduced or revisited using picture books as part of this process. With Song's guidance many of the children seemed to make more in-depth connections to themselves and to the world during book discussions (Field notes, May 9, 2007).

In the following discussion, born out of a conversation about the book *Tea with Milk* (Say, 1999), the children were asked by Song to think about how they could help people understand different cultures and/or traditions.

> Song and the children got in to a discussion about ignorance and the ways they could help educate people or help people questions when they might not understand. One of the children brought up a moment in Mrs. S's class and how someone rudely responded to a guest speaker from India by asking, "What is that on your head?". In reference to the traditional painted dot on the speaker's forehead. Song and the children discussed how they could ask questions to learn more about others in more thoughtful ways. Song then brought up how in some cultures arranged marriages were still a part of their traditions and asked the children to think about how a person might feel if someone were to put down

> these traditions. In this moment Dana raised her hand and shared with the whole class about a time, in another school, when she told a student about some of the things she celebrated and the student told her, "That's stupid!" Song and the children talked again about how often people do not mean to be unkind but may not understand. They talked about the ways they could help others. (Field notes, March 8, 2007)

In contrast to Dana's initial reluctance to participate during class discussions, is Dana in this moment, openly sharing with her classmates an unpleasant experience from her life, an instance in which she was vulnerable to another child's negative opinion. This moment makes me reflect back to the early months of the fall and Dana's struggle composing her all-about-me folder and I am reminded of Dana's previous description of herself when she said "I don't know why but it takes me [a] long [time] to get used to different friends" (Recorded conversation, February 26, 2007). Perhaps, because this was a new classroom composed of diverse children, Dana was wondering what to share about herself with her classmates. During a conversation in April, Dana explained that because her memory was very strong, there were particular memories in which she felt she was "right…there. It's like it happened yesterday…" (Recorded conversation, April 23, 2007). In this moment Dana was referring to her memory of a trip to Disney World, but the words she used made me wonder about her memory of a former classmate's criticism of her traditions. Perhaps, because this unpleasant memory was particularly strong for Dana, she had learned that when the terrain of a classroom landscape was unknown, it was better to stay quiet before revealing herself to others. It is also possible that Song's questions throughout this discussion allowed Dana to see new ways in how she might understand her previous experience and what actions she might, possibly, take in the future if such an incident were to happen again.

Becoming Wakeful to the Emphasis Dana Placed upon Family

That evening, many hours after the lunch hour discussion with Dana, I listened to our conversation again and I was struck by the energy in Dana's voice when she spoke about her family in comparison to the monotone she used while she talked about her folder (Field notes on conversation, March 12, 2007). The monotone was only interrupted when she pointed out the torn picture of the little mermaid, the heroine of Walt Disney's animated film *The Little Mermaid*. Dana explained, that before the little mermaid picture was ripped, the picture had occupied a large space on Dana's folder. This was a picture she seemed to particularly like, unlike the images of the turkey, the cake, or the ice cream. Dana suggested to me that perhaps "one day when [the folder] [got] laminated…it got ripped" (Recorded conversation, March 12, 2007). Using this picture as a departure point I began to think about the image's importance for Dana, as signified by her enthusiastic tone of voice, and I was reminded of prior moments throughout the year when Dana had spoken about her family's previous trips to Disney World (Field notes, November 15, 2006; February 26, 2007). The shift I noticed in Dana's voice was about a picture that was associated with a memory of family trip. Perhaps, this picture was one way in which Dana was attempting to share part of herself with her new classmates as she hastily put together her all-about-me folder. Perhaps, this image represented for her a previous family trip and the importance of her family life.

Through conversations with Manar, I learned about the importance Manar placed upon family and the efforts she made to ensure that her children knew their relatives in Syria[70]. One afternoon as we discussed Manar's mother's recent visit to Canada to be with Manar as the family prepared for the arrival of Dana's baby sister, Ayaa, Manar described Dana's reaction when her grandmother left. Manar explained that because her parents were "very close to [the children]" Dana "was crying" because "she missed her grandmother a lot when she left" (Recorded conversation, March 7, 2007). Manar went on to explain that because of her own desire to see her family over the years as well as the need for her to complete her dentistry degree, a program she had begun at a Syrian university before she and husband first moved to the United States in 1996 for his medical training, she returned each summer to Syria with her children . While Manar was at the university during the day her mother would look after the children. This was why, Manar explained, her children were "maybe more connected to their grandfather and grandmother than me…because they [have] spent [a] longer time with them" as result of the intense hours Manar needed to spend at the university (Recorded conversation, March 7, 2007). The summer before Dana began grade 3 at Streamside School, Manar and the children were in Syria for a much longer period of time. Manar was there to complete the requirements of her degree, a process which took close to 5 months. She explained this was why Dana and Amar arrived late for the start of their school year at Streamside School.

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[70] In March, 2008, while discussing the importance of family with Dana and Manar, I learned that they, Amar, and Ayaa were to go to Syria for the summer. Dana's father, Mohammed, would join them for the month of July. Manar explained that because they had been away for 2 years, on this visit, they planned to be there from the beginning of June until the end of September. They were quite excited as the apartment they had bought in Syria was ready to be occupied (Field notes on conversation, March 20, 2008).

Manar acknowledged that geographic distance was a challenge in maintaining the close ties the children had developed with her parents. Manar explained this was something she felt strongly about because “you have to make sure that your kids [are] like related to your family” as she did not want her children “to be…stranger[s]” (Recorded conversation, March 7, 2007). Later, she explained, it saddened her to hear of children “grow[ing] up…hav[ing] their own families [in a country different than their origins]…and after that they will not know…who their…original family [is]” (Recorded conversation, March 7, 2007). In this and a subsequent conversation, Manar discussed the tentative plans she and Mohammad had on returning to the States once he completed his medical training. Manar was also hopeful that she would be able to practice professionally in the States or in Canada once Ayaa was of age to enter day care and she had filled that particular state’s or province’s professional requirements (Field notes on conversation, April 13, 2007). Ultimately, however, as Manar clarified on a number of occasions throughout our conversations, she and her husband would like to return to Syria with the children “maybe [in] 3 years” because “I don’t want to…stay a long time away from my family” (Recorded conversation, March 7, 2007). Manar felt the younger her children were when they made this move would make it “easier for them [to] get used [to being in Syria] again” (Recorded conversation, March 7, 2007). As Dana was the oldest in the family, Manar was particularly concerned about Dana as she explained “it’s going to be hard [for Dana to return to Syria] when she gets bigger” and was a determining reason in sending Dana to a Syrian school during the summer because “I was like pushing her—you have to go, you have to go, you have to attain…learn some Arabic, you know?” (Recorded conversation, April 13, 2007).

As I listened to Manar I learned a family story about the importance of family and being intimately familiar with the ties which connected her and her family to relatives in Syria. Interwoven throughout this family story were Dana's parents' plans on returning to Syria in the near future[71]. This was a story Dana was familiar with and although her extended family was not on this side of the Atlantic, Dana spoke knowledgeably about them (Field notes on conversation, April 23, 2007). It seemed for Dana living out plotlines of being a daughter, an older sister, and a person with strong ties to her family in Syria were significant in the ways she understood herself. Perhaps, at the beginning of the year, as Dana uneasily negotiated who she was, she was unsure how to explain to her new classmates the complexity of her family ties, ties which stretched across many kilometers, but nevertheless, were still emotionally influential. At that time it was easier for Dana to live a cover story by resisting active participation during class discussions which encouraged the children to talk about their family experiences, and to allow her classmates to assume her life was composed of essentially one home context.

As I began to attend more carefully to the importance Dana placed upon her family, I began to notice the ways in which she quietly emphasized how she knew herself in relation to them. In February as part of the classroom's Valentine's Day celebrations, Song asked the children to write a paragraph about belonging and what it meant to each of them. Dana wrote the following:

> Belonging means to me when I belong to my family, earth, and my class. When I belong to my family I feel that we are all cozy in one house. When I belong to my class it feels like we are all a group in this class. For an example when we go

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[71] In March, 2008, I asked about Manar's and the family's future plans. At the time of our conversation, they intended to stay in Canada for one more year and were unsure if they would stay or return to the United States or Syria following that year (Field notes on conversation, March 20, 2008).

> outside for recess we all join up in a group another example was one time when I was new to this school everyone was asking me to play with them. When I was 2 years old me and my parents went to Disney and we got to go to the museum. (Dana's writing, February 14, 2007).

As I attended to Dana's writing I was conscious of the emphasis Dana placed upon belonging and the ways it was created as a result of living in relation with others at home and in school. Dana's writing also makes me think more deeply about the moment a child criticized her celebrations as "stupid" as well as about her first day school experience at Streamside, a time when she shyly walked about on the playground. Perhaps, present for Dana at the beginning of the year was her fear that her new classmates might criticize her and, thus, indirectly belittle her family. If this happened, perhaps Dana wondered, how she could possibly belong in her new classroom, considering that belonging seemed to mean for Dana something achieved relationally.

In a following conversation, when I asked if there was anything she would like to add to her time/lifeline, a topic previously discussed, Dana replied "lots of birthdays are going to happen" (Recorded conversation, March 19, 2007). Dana proceeded to add each family member's birthday to her time/lifeline. She added her new baby sister's birthday at the end and commented "last but not least… the baby of the family and the last birthday" (Recorded conversation, March 19, 2007). Of particular interest for Dana was her new baby sister, Ayaa. The changes in Dana's life brought about by Ayaa's arrival were something Dana spoke about each time we met at lunch hour (Field notes on conversation, April 23, 2007). Dana enthusiastically spoke about her role as the elder sister to Ayaa and her brother, Amar and the many family stories she shared were about her brother and sister. When describing the first time Dana met her baby sister, Dana explained, she and Amar "just couldn't wait, not at all. Not at all, it was too, too exciting" and that when they finally met her she and Amar "were speechless" (Recorded conversation, March 19, 2007). By attending to the emphasis Dana placed upon her family, I began to better understand why, perhaps, Dana's first attempt on the collage for her all-about-me folder was not meaningful. With little time to complete the task and anxious about her classmates' impressions of her, Dana was unsure how to negotiate with others the complexity of her family and life.

A Sustaining Thread in Dana's Stories to Live by Emerges in the Classroom

> Dana's photograph came up again during the belonging discussion in the sharing area. I overheard her share with Logan a photograph of herself in her prayer clothes holding the Koran. This was the first time I can remember seeing her work with a boy. Logan then asked her about the hijab and how it is worn, which she explained. (Field notes, March 19, 2007)

On this particular afternoon in mid March, as part of their ongoing discussions about belonging, the children were discussing in pairs the picture book *The Lotus Seed* (Garland, 2001). As partially depicted in the opening field note, the photograph Dana shared with her classmate is a picture of Dana dressed from head to toe in a white robe and in her hands is a copy of the Koran. Her head is covered and the material around her head carefully frames her face. This particular photograph was a recent picture in Dana's collection. Like the rest of her classmates at the beginning of March, Dana had begun taking photographs for the citizenship education project.

Because Dana had two disposable cameras, as a result of an incident in which she thought she had lost her original camera only to find the missing camera the next day, Dana had plenty of film. Dana made use of her extra film by taking photographs which she felt represented symbols of belonging (Field notes, March 19, 2007). Dana developed one set of film early and in this set was the photograph of her dressed in the clothing she wore for prayers. That afternoon, immediately after the recess bell, and prior to pair work with Logan, Dana asked if she could stay in at the break as she wanted to talk about her citizenship education project.

> Dana began to talk about one of the "extra" photographs she took with her new camera. She said her mother had taken a photograph of her in her prayer clothing holding the Koran. She then explained to me the ritual cleansing which happens before prayer and before one can hold the Koran. She said she took this photograph because for her it is a symbol of belonging and it is a symbol of Islam. (Field notes, March 19, 2007)

As Dana and I chatted, I noted the confidence, with which she spoke, alongside my own surprise at her inclusion of this photograph as a possibility for her citizenship education project. In the moment she referred to this picture as "extra" and it seemed to me that although she was proud of it, there was some uncertainty on her part whether or not she would include it as part of her final set of photos for her project. Dana's indecision, however, soon faded as observed later in the afternoon when she shared her photograph with Logan, making me wonder what possibility could have contributed to her sudden change of heart. Perhaps, after having explained to me why she thought this picture was an important symbol of belonging, she decided it was no longer "extra", but that it was significant to her. It is also possible my reaction to her photograph at recess away from her classmates' first time reactions to the picture gave her the confidence she may have needed to share it with Logan. Further encouraged by Logan's positive response, it seemed, Dana decided to share the photograph with the entire class as seen later that same afternoon (Field notes, March 19, 2007).

In many ways, this particular day in March reminded me of that moment in November when Dana shared with her classmates that she was Muslim. Yet, despite the resonance, I am also cognizant of the differences defining each instance. Rather than waiting for someone to provide a moment in which to share something about her as she did in November, Dana, in March, was now creating this opportunity on her own with the help of one particular photograph. The photograph emphasized the emergence of a new story about Dana, a story that began to be regularly told by her as this particular photograph appeared at other points of time in the classroom and in discussion with a variety of classmates (Field notes, March 21, 2007; April 2, 2007; April 23, 2007).

During the month of December, in the early stages of the citizenship education project, as Song, Jean Clandinin, and I tentatively discussed our ideas, I was uncertain how the children in Song's classroom, particularly Dana, would respond to the inclusion of their lives outside of the classroom as part of their classroom activities. Despite my initial uncertainty, the children's encouraging response to the project was overwhelming as observed throughout the spring (Field notes, March 7, 8, 14, 21, 2007; April 18, 23, 25, 2007; May 1, 3, 7, 9, 2007). Challenges did arise, however. Perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of the project was encouraging the children to think metaphorically about what belonging could possibly mean. Because of this, this particular photograph task proved to be, initially, demanding for many of them. It also created the opportunity, however, for some of the most imaginative photographs to emerge (Field notes, April 4, 2007) and it was out of this particular task that Dana took some of her most meaningful photographs (Field notes on conversation, April 16 and 23, 2007). In conversation with Song and Jean Clandinin, Song pointed out to us that over time supported by the project's ongoing book and photograph discussions and reflective writing, the children's ability to think abstractly developed in the ways they were able to express themselves in relation to their classmates' different experiences (Field notes on conversation, June 6, 2007). This was an aspect which Song believed strengthened the community of her classroom.

As I lay Song's words alongside Dana's interest in the citizenship education project and in particular Dana's reaction to it, I wonder if the response Dana received from her classmates, as suggested by Song, encouraged Dana to feel like she was an important member of Song's classroom. Perhaps, this encouraged Dana to share more of herself with her classmates and with me during our talks at lunch hours (Field notes, March 21, 22, 2007; April 16, 23, 2007). During our latter lunchtime conversations, as Dana and I concentrated on her project photographs, it became apparent to me the citizenship education project was for Dana, like the talks we had about the possibility of her new all-about-me folder. Dana began to use the word "folder" interchangeably with the word "poster" and I understood that she saw the two, the new folder and the citizenship education project poster, as the same thing (Field notes on conversation, April 23, 2007).

Attending to Dana's Sense of Belonging

In the classroom, in correlation with the citizenship education project and its ongoing book discussions, I observed in Dana a willingness to verbally participate more in whole class conversations (Field notes, March 8, 14, 19, 21, 2007). Despite Dana's increased participation, however, I could not have predicted her willingness to share the photograph she did with Logan. Prior to this moment, I asked the children "to put on their thinking caps" so they might think about the book I was about to read, *The Lotus Seed*, and if it possibly contained any "symbols of belonging" (Field notes, March 19, 2007). Upon completion of the story, I asked the children to partner up and to discuss their initial impressions of the book. As Dana happened to be seated next to me, I watched her turn and begin talking with Logan. It was, admittedly, an instance in which I had a hard time containing my surprise for it was the first time I observed Dana work with another boy in a partner situation. I acknowledge that I was not in the classroom every day of the week throughout the year and, of course, there may have been other occasions in which Dana worked willingly with a boy as a partner. But based upon my time in the classroom, prior to this occurrence, it was not something I had not witnessed nor had I heard Dana mention any of the boys in the classroom as one of her friends (Field notes on conversation, March 12, 2007). The moment was also made more complex by Dana's volunteering of her photograph. I had asked the children to talk about the "symbols of belonging" present in the book and had not mentioned the photography work they were involved with. I was amazed then to see Dana add to this discussion a personal touch by sharing her photograph with Logan. In turn, Logan responded with his own question and asked about the traditional wearing of the hijab he had seen other women wear. It did make me wonder why Dana felt Logan was someone with whom she could share her photograph, for as far as I knew he was the first of her classmates to have seen it. Dana's comfort level with Logan may have also been connected to the person Logan was, for in February on Valentine's Day, a day which Dana acknowledged she did not celebrate (Recorded conversation, February 26, 2007), Logan remembered to bring her cinnamon hearts, a different type of candy than the one he gave his friends as he knew Dana did not eat gelatin[72] (Field notes, February 14, 2007).

Revisiting the conversation Jean Clandinin, Song, and I had, in which Song pointed out her observations of the children's increased thoughtful responses, I am reminded of other moments in which Dana was shown by her classmates that she was a valued member of the classroom. At the beginning of May, I arrived at the school early to have lunch with the entire class. At the beginning of the lunch break I sat with Dana and several of her classmates. Since summer was approaching, the children were talking about their holiday plans and which teacher they might have in grade 4. Their talk of the future returned them to the past and they began to share with me their grade 2 stories. Although Dana was quiet during the telling of their stories, prior to this Dana was an active contributor to the conversation. Seeming to note Dana's quietness, one of Dana's classmates, Simar, shared a story about Dana and Dana's first day of school at Streamside in grade 2. Dana on that particular day had not brought a lunch or a snack. Dana joined in the conversation at this point and explained that she and her mother had thought Streamside School was like her old school in the United States, a school which provided lunch each day. Sophie, who was also seated with us, interjected and reminded Dana that she and her other classmates had shared their lunch and snacks with her. Dana said she remembered this as well (Field notes, May 3, 2007).

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[72] In conversation with Manar and Dana about Logan, Manar mentioned that Logan was a classmate she had heard about from Dana (Field notes on conversation, October 4, 2007).

As I think of this moment again, I wonder if Dana, in response to her classmates and their story of her first lunch at Streamside School, was reminded of the history she had with this group of children now rooted in this particular classroom. In choosing to respond to the story told about her, Dana shared with her classmates why she had arrived without a lunch on her first day of school at Streamside in grade 2. Thinking about Dana, her classmates, and Song, makes me conscious of the time it took Dana to feel comfortable on this landscape.

Underlying Dana's sense of community in Song's classroom was Dana's relationship with Song, and her awareness of the care Song took throughout the year to regularly involve Dana in the ways she felt comfortable (Field notes, October 2, 2006; November 22, 2006; December 11, 2006; March 8, 2007; April 23, 2007). Much like the preparations Song had in place for Dana the day she arrived, the attention Song placed upon Dana was present throughout the year and Dana's awareness of this took time to unfold. As Dana gradually became more sensitive to Song's attentiveness, Dana, as particularly observed during the middle and latter parts of the school year, had a strong sense of who she was in her classroom and in relation with Song and her classmates.

On the surface it would appear that Dana's dramatic emergence the afternoon she shared her memorable photograph was slow in occurring. However, there were earlier moments in which Dana had begun this process. The arrival of Dana's sister, Ayaa, during the winter break at the end of December, I believe, enabled Dana to begin sharing in the classroom some of her home experiences (January 8, 2007; January 15, 2007;

March 21, 2007). This was, possibly, one of the ways that Dana felt she was negotiating with her classmates, as well as with me, who she was in relation with her family by talking about her baby sister. During our lunchtime conversations, Ayaa was a frequent topic of discussion as Dana excitedly informed me of the changes Ayaa was rapidly experiencing (Recorded conversation, April 23, 2007) and the differences in routine Dana was observing at home (Recorded conversation, March 19, 2007).

Because of our conversations I was aware of the importance Ayaa had in Dana's life. The complex ways Dana understood Ayaa and her family, however, only became clearer once we began to talk about the poster she was making for her citizenship education project. Dana wanted to organize her poster according to the tasks in which the photographs were first assigned. As a result each corner of her poster was allotted to these categories: people with whom I belong, places I belong outside of school, places I belong in school, and symbols of belonging. Noting the empty space in the middle of her poster, I asked Dana if she had plans for its centre and she explained "I'm going to put my sister [there]" (Recorded conversation, April 16, 2007). Later in the conversation I returned to Dana's decision to place Ayaa's photograph in the middle of the poster and I asked her about this. Dana explained to me "this is my sister… she belongs to me and I belong to her and she's one of all these pictures" (Recorded conversation, April 16, 2007). Dana's thoughtful argument continued a few minutes later as she pointed out the photograph of her grandparents and explained "I belong to them, and that's…my grandma and grandpa…My mom wouldn't be [here]… [and without] my other grandma and grandpa, my dad wouldn't be [here]...And so that's why I, I belong to them too"[73] (Recorded conversation, April 16, 2007).

As Dana explained to me the importance of Ayaa and the place in which Ayaa fit within the larger scheme of her extended family, I began to better understand the logic underlying Dana's decision to place Ayaa in the middle of the poster. As the youngest member of Dana's family, Ayaa was "one of all these pictures", the individual who belonged to all of them and who would not be here were it not for their presence, a presence which seemed to also signify to Dana her own existence and sense of belonging in her family. Dana's family was a part of who she was and was an interwoven thread within her narrative coherence (Carr, 1986). Upon nearing the completion of her poster for the citizenship education project, Dana reflected upon the collage she attempted to make for her all-about-me folder at the end of September. Noting the differences between the two, the sparseness of the first collage on her folder in comparison with the multitude of photographs on her poster Dana commented that her original all-about-me folder "felt really weird" because it seemed to be "all about objects" (Recorded conversation, April 23, 2007). The citizenship education project and the plentiful opportunities it provided for Dana to include her family experiences created for her a narrative unity (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988). Perhaps because of this, Dana felt able to better negotiate who she was in relation with her peers as observed in the ways she participated throughout the end of the year.

Thinking about Dana throughout the school year, as she gradually negotiated who she was; I am struck by her sense of knowing as conveyed in the words she chose to use during our conversations, words which have stayed with me. As I wonder about Dana's future in Canada, in the United States, in Syria and her future negotiations on new school landscapes[74], perhaps the year Dana had in Song's classroom will be the experiences she draws upon as she negotiates curriculum with future teachers and classmates who she is as a daughter, a big sister, a granddaughter, a cousin, a Muslim, a respectful friend, a learner…

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[73] As I read aloud Dana's comments about her family, Manar seemed surprised and asked Dana if she had really said this to which Dana replied she had. Manar informed Dana that her ideas were "beautiful" (Field notes on conversation, September 24, 2007).

Words of Belonging[75]

right there in the middle
this is my sister
she belongs to me
I belong to her

when I belong to my family
we are all cozy
in one house

that's my grandma and
grandpa
My mom wouldn't be
or my other grandma and
grandpa
my dad wouldn't be
I belong to them
on top of everyone else
this is my sister
she's one of all these pictures

when I belong to my class
we are all a group

that's my class
I have a lot of friends
we work together as a team
where we have lunch
where we learn the most

right there in the middle
this is my sister
she belongs to me
I belong to her

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[74] In September of 2007 I learned from Manar and Dana that Dana was attending a new school focused upon education in Arabic and English (Field notes on conversation, September 24, 2007).

[75] This is a poem I wrote using Dana's words as found in the transcripts of our conversations where we concentrated upon her photographs symbolizing belonging as well as her paragraph written about belonging. I particularly emphasized Ayaa to convey the manner in which Dana frequently spoke about her.

CHAPTER SIX

Lilly: Knowingly on the Move ~ Amid and Upon Multiple Landscapes

Lilly Situated in Place: Stories Told and Reaffirmed

On the day of our first lunchtime conversation, Lilly greeted me at the doorway of the classroom with her lunch bag and thermos in her hands. Lilly waited wordlessly, while Song and I chatted, and only revealed her impatience to get started in the way she grabbed my hand and led me away once Song and I finished talking. As we walked down the hallway, Lilly informed me she woke up early that morning to prepare sushi for lunch, a lunch which contained portions for the both of us. If she had made the sushi the night before, Lilly explained, it would not be as fresh and she wanted it to taste as delicious as possible (Field notes on conversation, February 28, 2007).

Upon our arrival at the room in which we were to have our lunch, I saw that it was occupied. Lilly and I decided to enter, as the woman inside appeared to be in the process of leaving. We three exchanged greetings and the woman explained she was a speech pathologist helping some of the children at the school. She apologized for her late departure and Lilly and I readily responded by helping her gather up her papers. While we tidied up, we casually chatted and I identified who Lilly and I were, but I did not explain in detail why we were there. I was surprised then when the woman turned her attention upon Lilly. She asked Lilly her name and what our plans were for the lunch hour. Lilly identified herself and explained that she and Ms. Mitton were going to talk about school. I echoed Lilly's response and soon after this our conversation ended and the woman[76] left (Field notes on conversation, February 28, 2007).

As I had known Lilly since the beginning of that school year, I was not surprised by the way Lilly responded to the woman's questions. Lilly had a way of speaking assuredly, and despite being in a new place in the school building, in this moment, Lilly had seemed at ease. Possibly, her confidence was related to her history at Streamside School, a school she had attended since kindergarten and her older brother, Cole, since grade 1. Other than Lilly's preschool years, Streamside was the only school Lilly had known (Field notes on conversation, April 25, 2007). Unlike some of her classmates who had only recently begun their grade 3 year at Streamside, Lilly could speak knowledgeably about the school and, occasionally, liked to point out her previous classrooms as well as the children she had known since kindergarten and preschool (Field notes, April 2, 2007; Recorded conversation, April 25, 2007). For Lilly, school was a place in which she was comfortable and, in her own words, was a landscape which felt like "home" (Field notes, March 7, 2007). Lilly had knowledge not only of the school, but also of herself as someone with a history situated in it. This was an understanding she shared with others, for she was storied by her classmates as someone with a history at Streamside School, as exemplified in the following moment between Lilly and her classmate, William.

> William was fascinating because he became quite controlling with the group. He had a collection of dinosaurs, transformers and other mechanical kinds of toys. There was one moment when he shared a marble and said that Lilly would know

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[76] In September, 2007, as Lilly and I talked about this moment and where it appears in the narrative account, she commented upon the way I began the story in the middle of the year. I explained that the story moves around in time to which Lilly suggested "it's [kind of] like rewinding a movie in your mind" (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

> about it. She looked uncertain and he told the story of how she had been with him in kindergarten when they got to pick something from the kindergarten teacher's jar. He remembered what Lilly had picked. I was amazed. (Field notes, November 8, 2006)

Throughout William's presentation of his all-about-me box, a favorite activity for the children during their turn as star of the week, he attempted to control the pace of this moment by pausing before he gave an answer as well as issuing instructions upon how to handle his all-about-me box items. He seemed to be enjoying the attention which was directed towards him making the inclusion of Lilly in this moment all the more contrasting and memorable. Although Lilly did not recall the event William was referring to, my understanding of this instance draws my attention to Lilly as she storied herself as someone with a history at Streamside during our conversations, a story reaffirmed for her by William and by the friendships she had.

> This week's star of the week is Ella. Ella was proudly seated in the rocking chair and occasionally a small smile crossed her features. Song wrote down the interview topics and the children's hands immediately went up into the air to ask Ella questions. Ella called upon Lilly; I remembered Ella's letter to the soldiers in Afghanistan and how she described Lilly as her best friend[77]. (Field notes, November 20, 2006)

As I grew to know Lilly throughout the fall, and as I often observed her in friendly conversation with a variety of her classmates (October 30, 2006; November 15, 2006; November 16, 2006; November 30, 2006), I gradually became aware of the many friendships she seemed to have in the classroom. Yet, one child in particular, Ella, seemed to be someone special in Lilly's life and throughout the year I would sometimes notice them warmly embracing each another during quiet moments in the classroom (October 25, 2006; March 7, 2007). In conversations with Lilly, Ella was a regular topic and seemed to be a friend who was very special in her life. Lilly explained she and Ella had met when they "were around 2 years old" and they had been "together in pre-school" before continuing on into kindergarten and higher grades at Streamside School (Recorded conversation, February 28, 2007). Lilly often referred to Ella as her best friend (Field notes on conversation, March 21, 2007) as the pair had been "friends [for] so long" (Recorded conversation, February 28, 2007).

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[77] In response, Lilly was surprised that Ella had not told her about this piece of news in Ella's letter. Lilly commented "[Ella] didn't tell me that...and we've known each other since we were like babies" (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

Understanding Lilly's friendship with Ella was initially challenging to be wakeful to, particularly its significance to Lilly. Early in the school year, based upon my observations in the classroom, I understood that Ella was one of Lilly's friends, but did not distinguish her from the many other friends Lilly seemed to have. It was only when I began recorded conversations with Lilly, and with her family, that I began to attend more fully to this particular relationship. This friendship was dear to Lilly and also deeply connected to Lilly's sense of her history at Streamside School, a school she had known since kindergarten and a close friend she had known since each of them were "around 2 years old" (Lilly's time/lifeline, December 20, 2006). Lilly's friendship with Ella made me also consider Lilly's other relationships and their significance to who Lilly understood herself to be on the school landscape[78].

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[78] In September, 2007, as I discussed with Lilly and her mother, Li-ying, Lilly's friendship with Ella, Li-ying told me that Lilly and Ella were in the same class again for grade four. Li-ying was happy about this and told a story about Ella's mother who called Li-ying to inform her of the good news that Lilly and Ella were together again (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

Early Encounters with Lilly

One snowy lunch hour in late November, I arrived at the school to learn from one of the children the class had a substitute teacher (Field notes, November 27, 2007). I felt badly that Song was not feeling well and was sorry that she was not there, but I also knew from a previous occasion that it was an interesting experience to be with the children and observe the way they acted with one another and with the attending teacher, when Song was not present (Field notes, October 30, 2006). I also thought of this occasion as a moment in which I could be of help to the substitute teacher by keeping the routines of the classroom running somewhat smoothly. As I had already spent two months in the school prior to this moment, I was comfortable in the classroom and was confident that the children would look to me for help if a situation arose. It was with no surprise then, when I found Lilly at my side throughout the afternoon.

On this particular day the school was hosting a book fair in its library. Each class had a scheduled time that they might attend the fair and Song's class was to be there soon after lunch. Once inside the library, Lilly took my hand and led me on a tour throughout the room. While we walked about the book fair, Lilly showed me the stamps, the pencils, and the book markers being sold that she liked. We chatted comfortably and I asked her what types of books she enjoyed reading. In response to my question, Lilly told me about an aunt she has in Taiwan who, on previous visits, brought Lilly books in Mandarin.

A month prior to the book fair, I had overheard Lilly talking with her two of her classmates, Simar and Sophie, about marriage and surnames. As I arrived in the middle of the girls' conversation, I am not sure what precipitated it nor why they, grade 3 students, would be concerned about something like marriage. I was fascinated by their discussion, however, and, in particular, Lilly's comment that the changing of her surname depended upon whom she married, something which she said she had learned from her mother[79] (Field notes, October 26, 2006).

Some weeks later while Lilly and I talked at the book fair, my memory of her conversation with her classmates in October was still on my mind. As a result of that conversation I had become deeply curious about Lilly's background as I knew she had a connection to Taiwan based upon earlier exchanges in the classroom (Field notes, November 8, 2006; November 15, 2006). I was unsure of her birthplace, however, a situation which prompted me to ask her where she had been born. Lilly explained her parents were from Taiwan, but she had been born in the United States before she and her family moved to Canada when she was a baby (Field notes, November 27, 2007).

Later that evening as I wrote my field notes, I recounted my experience with Lilly in the afternoon. I assumed, at the time, that as a familiar face she stayed with me as a way of living out what she was comfortable with. However, as I think about Lilly and the ways I came to consider her over time as insightful, I am now drawn to other plausible possibilities. On that particular day I was confident as an experienced adult in this classroom. I thought I knew the children and what might arise during the afternoon. Upon reflection, it is possible that Lilly, knowing me as someone closely associated with Song, was worried that I might feel out of rhythm without Song's presence. Possibly, Lilly was also concerned that I might feel uncertain by going to the library, a place beyond the borders of Song's classroom. Perhaps Lilly felt it was important, as an established member of her classroom and as a person who knew this school, to spend time with me since Song, my friend, was not there and I was outside of the room in which I usually spent my time.

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[79] In conversation with Lilly and Li-ying, about this moment, Lilly asked her mother why she did not have a middle name. In response Li-ying explained their surname would become Lilly's middle name once she married and this ensured for Lilly the retention of her family name (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

Although I had been with Lilly in Song's classroom since the end of September, it is this particular moment, her interaction with me on that November day at the book fair, which makes me now consider more thoughtfully Lilly's understanding of herself in relation with others. Lilly's attentiveness to others was something particular to her.

Keeping Things in Her Mind

On my first day at school, soon after I entered the Song's class, I found myself having to explain to the children who I was. Overcome with feelings of nervousness and not quite sure where to begin, I started off by talking about the bracelet I was wearing, an evil eye bracelet from Turkey, and told the class it was my good luck bracelet and I wore it in anticipation of meeting them (Field notes, September 27, 2006). The afternoon passed quickly and during gym class, I was partnered with three of the girls and, among the three, Lilly happened to be one of them. Lilly and I did not exchange many words on this first afternoon, but she was soon to surprise me with what she remembered about me. On my second day of school having arrived in the middle of an after lunch story, I sat in the back while Song read aloud to the class. As the story wrapped up a few of the students gathered around me and asked a few questions. Lilly joined the conversation and showed me the bracelet she was wearing. I commented on its prettiness and she told me that it was her "good luck bracelet just like yours" (Field notes, September 28, 2006).

From the outset Lilly had a way of surprising me. On the day of our first conversation, Lilly's lunch considerations were, indeed, caring and were perhaps initially fuelled by her excitement at the prospect of us talking away from the in-classroom place. However, I also know from observing Lilly in the classroom that she interacted with people thoughtfully. Lilly's thoughtfulness was demonstrated in the way she actively listened and responded to individuals, children and adults alike (Field notes, October 30, 2006; November 7, 2006; November 22, 2006). This was a distinctive point I found surprising in a person her age, for at the time of our conversations Lilly was 9 years old, having just celebrated her birthday at the beginning of March. I was also fascinated by the way Lilly recalled past events and things previously told to her (Field notes, November 15, 2006; June 27, 2007). During one of our conversations weeks before I was to depart for Turkey I reminded Lilly of my upcoming trip, Lilly responded "I remember you telling me that… I keep it in my mind" (Recorded conversation, April 25, 2007).

A few weeks after I met Lilly, in conversation with Jean Clandinin and Song, as we discussed who we were drawn to in the classroom, Lilly was one of the children each of us felt was a possibility (Recorded conversation, October 11, 2006). Although I knew very little about Lilly at the end of my first week in Song's class, she was one of the children I was curious about (Journal, September 28, 2006) and was someone I would return to throughout the fall as I attempted to narrow down with whom I might be having conversations[80] (Journal, November 19, 2006; December 3, 2006). My curiosity about Lilly seemed to be reciprocated by her and, as the weeks passed, I occasionally found

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[80] Lilly suggested that the beginning of the school year must have been difficult for me because "you still had to think about who you would like to talk to...you said it was hard because you liked everyone [in the class]" (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

Lilly seated next to me making attempts, it seemed, to further get to know me (Field notes, October 26, 2007; November 15, 2006).

Unlike some of her classmates who tended to ask me many times about why I was returning to Turkey (Field notes, November 6, 2006; May 7, 2007; May 9, 2007), Lilly did not. During our conversations, Lilly often inquired about my life and the people in it and while her questions were frequent she never did ask me my reasons for living in another country other than Canada. Lilly had a way of drawing me into the discussion and often inquired into my own experiences while we were talking about hers (Field notes on conversations April 18, 2007; April 25, 2007). In one of our conversations Lilly asked about the friends I had made in the city since the time of my arrival in August of 2005. As I pondered aloud, Lilly suggested to me that I should include in my estimation "our class because you made friends with us" (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007). After naming my list of new friends I ended by stating "I'm very lucky I've met a lot of people in such a short time" to which Lilly responded "one year and boom, lots of friends" (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007). That evening, while I reflected upon the conversation I had with Lilly earlier in the day, I noted that Lilly spent much of our conversation asking me questions about my life in Canada and in Turkey. I concluded this was "something that Lilly does a lot of the time" (Field notes on conversation, April 18, 2007); however, I did not further explore this thought in my field notes and think about why she, perhaps, did.

Now as I look back, I wonder if Lilly's questions about my life were not only due to her interest in me, but also possibly due to her awareness of how I was new to this city and to her school. Perhaps, Lilly's experiences as a student at Streamside watching the arrival of many newcomers each year might have informed her of the challenge it can be for someone to move to an unknown place. It is also possible the stories Lilly knew of her family and their travels were informing her and was, perhaps, why she was compelled to welcome me early in the school year. I enjoyed Lilly's inquisitiveness and the queries she had about my life during our conversations. Only later, once I read the transcripts of these moments, did I become wakeful to the way Lilly asked me personal questions, a manner that emphasized her curiosity while it also revealed her insight[81].

In the month of March a few days prior to the distribution of the children's report cards for that grading period, Song had the children assess themselves. For this purpose, Song created a report card document for the children so that they, too, would have a voice during this assessment period. Upon completion, the children's self-assessments were also sent home along with the report cards Song graded. Song, in conversation with Jean Clandinin and me, about the children and their self-assessments, emphasized the importance of this kind of reflection. Song stressed the children's thoughts about their own learning were "the most important", something which she tried to call attention to in class by referring to the children's self-assessments as "real report card[s]" (Recorded conversation, March 21, 2007). Interested in what the children had written about themselves, I spent some time reading their words and was struck by a comment that Lilly had made. In response to the subject area of social studies Lilly wrote "I think I will get a green light[82]" because "I respect other peoples' religion[s] and I ask questions" (Lilly's self-assessment, March 21, 2007).

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[81] In response to the writing I shared with Lilly in September, 2007, Lilly asked me if I knew of the writer Roald Dahl. When I said I was aware of his work, she went on to explain that my writing was like Dahl's because "it's kind of like how he wrote about himself...like reflecting [upon] himself while [he thought] about someone else" (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

Based upon my experiences with Lilly during our lunchtime conversations, I could attest that Lilly did ask questions and seemed to enjoy doing so. This attentiveness that I experienced was not something she reserved for adults alone. In late April while the children worked on their citizenship education posters, I was busy walking about the class and answering the children's questions. Because the posters and their accompanying photographs took up a lot of room, many of the children were working on the floor with their materials spread about them. This made walking tricky at times as, not wanting to step on anyone's prized photos, I had to make sure I looked before I stepped. Because I wanted to be near Lilly, Dana, and Owen while they worked on their posters, I walked to the back of the room to where they were and was soon asked by Dana to sit down.

> The children worked on their posters the last 45 minutes of the afternoon. I sat with Dana as she asked me to and I was able to position myself between Lilly and Dana, near by was Owen. I heard Dana explain what the *Koran* was to Lilly. Dana told her that it was like the *Bible* and Lilly suggested the *Koran* is a special thing for her religion and this was really "cool". (Field notes, April 23, 2007)

It seemed I arrived midway through the tail end of a conversation between Lilly and Dana. Prior to my arrival I believe Lilly had asked Dana about the *Koran* that Dana was holding in one of her photographs. In her response Dana compared the *Koran* to the *Bible* possibly because she was attempting to convey to Lilly the religious importance of this text. Lilly was quick to recognize Dana's intention and to show her that she did understand, Lilly informed Dana that the *Koran* must be very special as emphasized by Lilly's use of the word "cool" to let Dana know the sincerity of her remarks.

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[82] In Song's classroom, a color grading system was used to convey a child's achievement. Number grades were also used, but Song did not emphasize these. Using the color grading system the grades were composed of green (highest achievement) to orange (satisfactory) to yellow (more effort needed). On a few occasions, I heard some of the children use the phrase "red light" in anticipation of test grade or on their self-assessments. I never did, however, observe a red light as a formal grade on a test or report card.

Examples such as these were what made Lilly fascinating to me as, over the year, time and time again, Lilly caused me to reconsider what I thought a child her age was relationally capable of (Journal, March 10, 2007; August 15, 2007; August 24, 2007). Thinking about Lilly and how my understanding about her fluctuated over time I am struck by not only how I was first drawn to her, but also by the way I came to see her as someone who asked questions and who remembered their answers by keeping them in her mind.

Attending to Lilly's Relationship Making

On the day of our first conversation, once we had the room to ourselves, I watched Lilly carefully unpack the lunch she prepared. Out of her bag emerged containers and two delicate tea cups. Each piece of sushi was tightly rolled and accompanying it was a colorful array of chicken nuggets and cooked broccoli, all of which was served with tea. Seated next to her I awkwardly placed my own efforts at lunch onto the table: a cinnamon roll, a cup of coffee, and the cookie I brought for her. Embarrassed by my own lack of effort in comparison to Lilly's, I hurriedly explained that cinnamon rolls were "my new favorite thing" and that because I had been "in a rush" I had not had the time to pack a proper lunch (Recorded conversation, February 28, 2007). In response to my effort Lilly thanked me for the cookie and then gently asked if I liked cinnamon rolls because "my mom made [cinnamon rolls] for us [the] last time?"

Thankful for her question I replied she was right and since that time I had not stopped "thinking about them" (Recorded conversation, February 28, 2007).

Lilly's preparations for our first lunchtime conversation suggested her enthusiasm matched my own and that she had been looking forward to this moment as much as I. As I recall the day of my first conversation with Lilly and this opening moment with her, I am reminded of how awkward it might have been if Lilly had interpreted my own efforts as unsatisfactory. A different child than Lilly might have been disappointed with my attempt at surprising her with a cookie considering she got up at 6:30 that morning to prepare our lunch. However, if she was disappointed, she did not reveal it to me. In the midst of my own embarrassment Lilly gently asked if I liked cinnamon rolls because her mother made them the first time I visited her home. I remember the feeling of relief that went through me and I was grateful to Lilly for her timely question, a question which implied that Lilly understood how awkward I felt in this moment (Field notes on conversation, February 28, 2007).

The gentleness of Lilly's manner was something I came to know about Lilly, a temperateness which she extended to the people around her, in school and at home. In this moment I was the receiver of Lilly's understanding and, arguably, as an adult in Lilly's classroom who the children seemed to want to spend time with, perhaps, Lilly's thoughtfulness was part of her efforts to sustain the relationship we had developed. All of this may certainly be true; however, I am also drawn to considering alternatives in light of what I know about Lilly. These possibilities are based upon my observations of her in the classroom in relation with her classmates, Song, and other adults, including myself.

> As the recess time came closer it was announced that it was raining outside and so there would be inside recess. This was a first for the year. Song explained the games and puzzles that they could use and I offered to stay in the classroom so she could take a break. She took me up on that and I was quickly gathered into a very challenging Harry Potter puzzle with a group of girls. (Field notes, September 14, 2006)

On this particular day, the children were to stay inside for recess due to the driving rain outside. It was the first indoor recess of the year and Jean Clandinin wanting to be helpful to Song on her first day in Song's classroom encouraged her to take a break and have a cup of tea. Much to Jean Clandinin's surprise Song did decide to leave the room and she soon found herself in the classroom tentative as to what her next step might be. This moment of uncertainty did not last long as Jean Clandinin was quickly invited to be a part of the puzzle building activity that was underway, an invitation extended by Lilly.

Ten months later, on the last day of school while Jean Clandinin was busy supervising the ice cream table watching the children pile on sugary toppings, this moment in September with Lilly once again rose to the surface of Jean Clandinin's conversation with her.

> At one point, I said something about not believing this was my last day and said something about my first day in September and how there had been indoor recess and I had not known anyone and that someone had invited me to play a game with them. Lilly's face lit up and Sophie looked at me and said "Was it me?" I said it

> had been Lilly and she said that we still have not finished that game. (Field notes, June 27, 2007)

In the first moment I am struck by the image of Lilly extending an invitation to an adult, she did not know. This invitation was offered in a place Lilly was comfortable in. During the immediate moments after Song left the room it is possible that Jean Clandinin, in this situation, was uneasy as this was her first day in the classroom and the children were still unknown to her as she was to them. In contrast to Jean Clandinin's uneasiness is my impression of Lilly and her invitation to Jean Clandinin to come and join an activity she and her friends had begun. In that moment it is possible that Lilly was able to imagine that Jean Clandinin might need some company in a place unknown to her. In the second moment we learn of Jean Clandinin's discomfort on this day as she recounts this with Lilly. Positioning these two moments alongside one another emphasizes for me not only Lilly's comfort level in the classroom, but also her attentiveness to Jean Clandinin on a day she was an unknown person in the room, something which contrasts sharply with her classmate, Sophie, who asks Jean Clandinin if she was the one who invited to her play.

At the beginning of my study I set out to capture moments of tension for children with family stories of immigration as they moved between the landscapes of home and school. I wonder why these two moments spread out over the course of the year have caught my interest, for the tension I was searching for is seemingly not apparent. Instead what I am left with is a sense of Lilly's assuredness. What also lingers, however, is a wonder. For Lilly to be so perceptive about the others around her would she not need to be comfortable and at ease on the school landscape that she was situated within? As I explore other moments in which I observed not only Lilly's comfort on the school landscape, but her perceptiveness as well, this is a question I will return to.

Mostly Everyone in the Class is My Friend

In late November as I walked about the classroom helping the children compose letters for Tyler, a classmate of theirs who was moving to the United States, Lilly shared with me her insight about the classroom.

> Lilly told me she would draw a picture of Tyler with his new friends, but she admitted Tyler was mostly friends with boys and he only had two friends in the class who were girls. She said she was his friend as was Taylor. She explained she didn't think Ella was his friend because she didn't play with him that much. I looked at Ella and she nodded in agreement. Lilly also said she hoped Tyler's new friends would be nice to him because she knew that sometimes friends could be mean to one another and she hoped that wouldn't happen to Tyler. (Field notes, November 30, 2007)

It was apparent to me in this moment Lilly understood something I could not see, the friendships already established in the classroom and the children's unwritten preferences of who they chose to be friends with. At the same time, it seems, Lilly also understood herself as someone who could be friends with a boy who chose to be friends only with other boys as silently confirmed by Lilly's friend Ella. It also seemed Lilly's perception of her classroom, classmate, and herself was based upon prior school experiences and was knowledge she drew upon as she explained Tyler, the classroom, and herself to me. What also drew my attention was the way in which Lilly looked forward and talked about her wishes for Tyler in his new school, a place where she hoped new people would be nice to him as she seemed to know that new places and friends could potentially mean difficult times.

Before our lunchtime conversations began, I observed the apparent ease with which Lilly seemed to interact with all of her classmates (Field notes, October 25, 2006; November 15, 2006; January 15, 2007; February 20, 2007). Lilly's outgoingness was obvious, particularly during moments when the children worked together in small groups. She seemed to enjoy these types of activities while also being willing to work with any of the children she was grouped with (Field notes, October 30, 2006; November 11, 2006; December 11, 2006). Once we began to talk at lunch hours, my understanding of how Lilly valued her relationships deepened. Friendship was a topic Lilly liked to regularly discuss and over time this allowed me to gain a better understanding of the ways Lilly understood herself in relation with her friendships and the effort she gave them. When I asked Lilly about her friends she often spoke about her friend, Ella, and her brother, Cole (Field notes on conversations, February 28, 2007; March 14, 2007; March 21, 2007; April 18, 2007; April 25, 2007). Her friendships, though, were not restricted to a specific set of individuals.

In early January, the first day back after the winter holiday break, I entered the school curious and anxious about how the children would respond to me. Upon entering the classroom I was overwhelmed with hugs and holiday stories, a response from the children which washed away any doubts that I previously had. Unlike September and October, a period of time when I felt the children and I were cautiously getting to know one another, in January we seemed to pick up where we had left off prior to the school holiday. During these initial moments hugs were freely given and I received much attention. At one point I had one child, Charlie, telling me a story while, Brooklyn and Lilly, waited for him to finish. It seemed Lilly was anxious to talk to me and while Charlie was speaking, out of the corner of my eye I saw her attempt to get my attention. Apparently, Brooklyn felt it was her turn next and I heard her sternly say "Lilly, I'm next; wait your turn." Lilly did not respond and stepped out of Brooklyn's way when Charlie finished speaking (Journal, January 9, 2007).

During one of our conversations, while discussing a piece of her writing about belonging, I asked Lilly about what she did at recess that made her feel like she belonged. In response to my question, Lilly replied "play with my best friends" and went on to name "Ella" as an example (Recorded conversation, March 21, 2007). Immediately after she named Ella as a "best friend" Lilly furthered her explanation as to who she played with by clarifying "well…mostly everyone in the class is [my friend]". I asked if this meant "boys and girls" and Lilly said it did. But she also pointed out to me that not everyone in the class acted in the way she did "because some girls only like…friends that are girls" while "boys like…their friends [who are boys]". Lilly summed up her feelings about this by stating "it's kind of weird when they do that" (Recorded conversation, March 21, 2007).

In light of these conversational moments with Lilly and the importance she placed upon the friendships she had with the boys and girls of her classroom as emphasized in the way she spoke about her classmate, Tyler, I return to the instance in which Lilly was told by Brooklyn that it was not her turn to speak with me. Perhaps Lilly was afraid of hurting her friend, Brooklyn, in this moment by arguing with her. Perhaps Brooklyn was correct and Lilly knew that it was Brooklyn's "turn" to speak with me. It is also possible that because I was close by during this exchange between Lilly and Brooklyn, Lilly may have chosen not to respond negatively to her as she did not want me to see her as anything less than positive. As I had observed on other occasions throughout the year, Lilly was not hesitant about expressing what she believed in (Field notes, October 23, 2006; January 12, 2007).

Lilly and Her Classmates: Wakeful Interactions on the Classroom Landscape

One particular afternoon in November, the children were busy in small groups creating questions about Peru, their new country of focus in social studies. The children gathered the materials needed for the activity, markers and chart paper, and found themselves a suitable place to work. Situated in the back of the room I happened to be standing next to the group in which Lilly was working. The group initially started to work on the large worktable and decided that the floor afforded them more space in which to move around. I was quite fascinated by the way they made decisions amongst themselves as there seemed to be many strong leaders in the group. Each one of the children, Lilly included, had an opinion about how matters were to be done and it had taken them some minutes to begin writing questions earnestly. The group was aware of my presence; but as they did not ask me any questions or for my input, I was happy to watch them quietly. The girls in the group began to organize their inquiry chart with a title and lines to indicate sections. One of the members of the group, William, complained that he had not had a turn yet and he was told by Simar to start writing questions. Questions about Peru's weather, food, needs, and housing appeared on the paper. Soon afterwards a new question appeared which prompted a conversation amongst the group, temporarily halting the generation of other questions.

> One of the children wrote "Do children go to school in Peru? A discussion ensued after this. Lilly was quite insistent that Peruvian children did go to school and William was quick to point out that Peru was very poor so schooling might be done outside and that's why some of the children get sunburns. (Field notes, November 22, 2006)

In this moment William's point of contention, a point he returned to frequently, was that since the country of Peru was poor, many children could not afford to attend school and if they did, it was possible that this happened outside judging from the "sunburned" color of Peruvian children's skin. In the children's social studies textbook there were photographs of Peru as well as the other countries they studied during the year. It is possible that William's point was based upon inferences he had made as a result of these photographs, inferences, it seems, caught upon the brown color of the children's skin as demonstrated in the word "sunburned" that he chose to use.

In response to William's point, Lilly was firm and attempted to assure William that many of the children probably did go to school and that this probably occurred inside school buildings. The other members of the group, Simar and Sophie, soon joined the conversation and followed Lilly's lead by pointing out examples of how education in the world has changed over time, using the differences between men and women as an example. Sophie's tone of voice became quite firm with William. Lilly echoed what Simar and Sophie were trying to say. Yet, despite their efforts, William remained adamant and seemed unsure and persisted with additional questions. In this moment I am also aware that the children attempting to help William see another point of view were children more familiar with skin tones of different colors, something, it seems, which had escaped William's realm of experiences up to this point.

Although Lilly and her classmates were unable to change William's mind[83], I was struck by the manner in which she attempted to make her point initially with him. Her example soon gathered support from other group members who then joined the conversation and contributed new examples. Interestingly, although the discussion was lively, the children did not argue, making me wonder now if Lilly's classmates were following Lilly's example as she was the first to take up this point with William and stayed with it for some minutes. Lilly was persuasive but did not attempt to force William to see it her way nor did she become angry when he was unwilling to concede she might have something worth listening to. The manner in which Lilly was able to discuss these types of issues with others was something I had observed a month earlier in quite a different conversation.

In late October during a particularly busy math lesson I found myself, along with Song and a parent volunteer, racing about the classroom attempting to answer the children's questions. It was during this hectic period of time while helping one of the children with a question on a math worksheet that I overheard Lilly and two of her classmates. Deep in discussion, they were talking about marriage and what it might mean to their future surnames.

> I heard Lilly say to Simar and Sophie if she marries a Chinese man she doesn't have to change her name if she doesn't want to, but if she marries a man who is

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[83] In September, Lilly recalled this moment with William and said it "wasn't very easy" attempting to change his mind (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

> not Chinese then she has to change her name because that's what her mother says. Simar replied she has to change her name when she marries and Sophie said firmly to Simar, "Simar—you don't have to change your name if you don't want to." Simar turned and looked at me and asked if I had changed my name. I told her I still have my own name but I have thought about adding my husband's name to mine. I explained I didn't want to lose my name though. Sophie said triumphantly "See!" Simar just smiled and said "I have to change my name when I get married." (Field notes, October 26, 2006)

Once Lilly stated her point, she withdrew and the conversation was then continued by Sophie and Simar. Sophie, apparently, was not satisfied with the answer Simar gave and possibly Simar, in this moment, feeling the pressure of Sophie's persistent questions, invited me into their conversation. Unfortunately, the response I gave seemed to bolster Sophie's argument against Simar. Unlike Sophie, Lilly, it seemed, was not attempting to change Simar's mind. Lilly was content to share what her mother had told her, but at the same time was not placing an expectation upon Simar to change her beliefs. Similar to the way Lilly discussed with William her point of view, this moment earlier in October with her two classmates reveals Lilly listening and not attempting to change a classmate's beliefs. In many ways both of these moments are indicative of how Lilly interacted with her classmates, friendly yet knowingly, and was something about Lilly that I began to grow accustomed to throughout our lunch hour discussions.

During one of our lunchtime conversations, Lilly mentioned she was "hoping" (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007) that in the afternoon she and her classmates might be able to work on their citizenship education projects, a project largely done on the days when Jean Clandinin and I were present in the classroom with Song. In response to Lilly I replied "maybe we'll have a little bit of time" but was not expecting this point to go any further until Lilly said "[we] usually do [the project] when you and Ms. Jean [are] here." I explained that due to the nature of the project and the number of questions which often come up "it helps Ms. Lee when we're [in the class]" because we can "answer questions too." The following excerpt from our conversation captures the back and forth dialogue between Lilly and me during the remainder of this point's discussion.

> Jen: I think it helps her because—her all by herself with the whole class…
>
> Lilly: It's hard.
>
> Jen: asking questions…
>
> Lilly: Twenty-seven kids with one person.
>
> Jen: would be a little hard for this project…
>
> Lilly: Three would be better. (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007)

Later as I reread the transcript of this conversation, I noted the rhythm of our dialogue, as in response to each other we seemed to build upon one another's answers. Lilly understood the point I was making, and to show that she did, she replied with insight of her own. Prior to this conversation, Jean Clandinin, Song, and I had wondered about the children and the project, and if they had noticed we tended to focus on this topic when we three were in the classroom together (Field notes, February 28, 2007; March 21, 2007). However until the day Lilly brought it up with me, I was not certain if any of the children had made this connection. I was surprised by Lilly's perception of the project as connected to the presence of Jean Clandinin, Song, and me in her classroom making me wonder what other things about Lilly had I missed early in the year.

This brief exchange of words with Lilly in which we played with why, possibly, the project occurred when the three of us were present in her classroom also allows me to notice something else. It is an instance where I can see Lilly imagining from the perspective of her teacher Song and how difficult it might be to handle the enthusiastic questions of 27 children. This moment suggests that Lilly is able to position herself from the vantage point of someone else, a significant point about Lilly's interactions with others and is something I continue to explore in upcoming pages.

On the day Lilly and Brooklyn were waiting to speak with me I initially thought Lilly was passively complying with Brooklyn's assertion that it was not Lilly's turn to speak next by stepping away and allowing Brooklyn to go ahead. Revisiting the day Lilly attempted to persuade William that many Peruvian children did attend school helps me now to see something I not only missed in January, but previously in October while Lilly discussed the topic of marriage and the changing of surnames with Sophie and Simar. In these moments it seemed Lilly was attending to whether or not her classmate or her group members were willing to hear her beliefs. For example, when William demonstrated he was not, she remained steadfast and approachable, but did not become annoyed with him for not acknowledging what she believed in. Perhaps, what I had not understood, later in the year, during the moment with Brooklyn and Lilly was that Lilly already knew Brooklyn was not willing to hear what she had to say and perhaps it was a better option to allow Brooklyn to speak with me first. On the day Lilly, Simar, and Sophie talked about marriage, possibly Lilly already had an idea about Simar's beliefs on this topic as it may have been based upon something Simar's mother had told to her, much like Lilly's understanding about marriage and surnames was based upon something her mother had shared. Depending upon which angle I look, Lilly's interactions with her classmates may be understood in multiple ways. However when I lay them alongside the lunchtime moment in which Lilly perceptively made connections between myself, Jean Clandinin, and Song and the citizenship education project, I am provided with additional understanding. I believe, unlike myself that year as I struggled to make sense of the school landscape I was situated in, this landscape was a place Lilly knew and moved knowingly upon.

Becoming Wakeful to Lilly's Sense of School as a Relational Place

In mid January on the day I was to visit Lilly's home in the evening and have my first conversation with her family, I spent the afternoon wondering what would transpire and who I would meet. In many ways before I met Lilly's parents I assumed I would be having conversations solely with Lilly's mother, Li-ying, as she and I had spoken on the phone about the study and arranged the details of my first visit to their home (Field notes, December 10, 2006). On the day I was to go to Lilly's house, however, I began to doubt my initial assumptions as I would be arriving at their home at 5:30 and perhaps close to their supper hour. It was a cold night and by the time I arrived my feet were slightly frozen inside my boots. Standing at their front door I waited nervously once I rung the bell. The door was soon opened and I was greeted by Li-ying who welcomed me inside. Lilly too was standing in the entry way and I found myself wondering if she was as nervous as me (Field notes on conversation, January 12, 2007). Leaving the entryway and following Lilly into the kitchen of her home, I soon realized the evening was to be a family affair as Lilly's father, Tai-shan, and her brother, Cole, were also waiting for me inside. Later in the evening Lilly's cousin, Sydney, would also join us. The possibilities I imagined some hours earlier about what the evening might entail had not entertained the likelihood that Lilly's entire family would be willing to talk with me (Field notes, January 12, 2007).

Beginning with that first evening and in subsequent conversations with Lilly's family, I was struck by a number of things, the collective manner in which I was welcomed as well as the nature of our discussion and how it frequently revolved around the topics of family and home. These two words, family and home, are subjects that may be understood separately, but over time I began to appreciate how family and home for them seemed to be understood interchangeably, things which are sustained by helping one another and sticking together (Field notes, March 12, 2007). Tai-shan described this philosophy as like using "chopsticks", only possible if both sticks are used together (Recorded conversation, January 12, 2007).

During my preliminary visit and in subsequent conversations with Lilly's parents, they shared with me the difficulties they had experienced during their initial years in the United States, a move which had been made so that Tai-shan could begin his doctoral degree in 1992. He explained they "almost [gave] up everything… [to]go there" and they were successful because of their decision as a couple to "work together" (Recorded conversation, January 12, 2007). This point was later reiterated to me by Li-ying when she explained that although that time in their lives was difficult she "wasn't afraid of [anything]…because I had the big shoulder [of my] husband" (Recorded conversation, March 1, 2007).

Later in the spring, in a second conversation with Lilly's mother, Li-ying, I inadvertently learned more about Lilly's helpfulness at home. This arose as Li-ying and I were discussing her early experiences in the United States, a period in their lives which was "miserable at times in the beginning" because they had "no money" (Recorded conversation, March 1, 2007). For Li-ying these early years were also complicated by her lack of English and her desire "to pick up the culture." This resulted in Li-ying attending a language school during the day while her husband was working on his doctoral degree. I asked Li-ying when she began to feel more comfortable about speaking English to which she replied "To tell you the truth [even] now…it's difficult for me" (Recorded conversation, March 1, 2007). I was surprised by her response and said so, but before Li-ying could reply Lilly interjected and pointed out she and her brother, Cole, were her mother's "teacher[s]" of English. Upon hearing Lilly's comment, Li-ying agreed and elaborated by stating "Oh yeah they teach me [English], they still teach me" (Recorded conversation, March 1, 2007).

Throughout this particular conversation, Lilly sat with her mother and me at the kitchen table occasionally contributing comments while she drew a picture. Prior to Lilly's comment that she and her brother were her mother's teachers of English, I noticed Lilly liked to add details to her mother's responses by adding on words or giving new pieces of background information. This set of circumstances initially concerned me as, at the time, I worried Li-ying might feel self-conscious about speaking with me in front of Lilly and Cole (Field notes on conversation, March 1, 2007). It was only after Li-ying agreed with Lilly that Lilly and Cole were indeed, at times, still her teachers of English that my tension dissipated.

In conversation with Tai-shan the first evening I visited Lilly's home I was struck by the chopstick metaphor he used to depict the workings of a healthy couple and family. In addition to this metaphor, Tai-shan also drew upon another vivid image from a "Chinese saying" to convey how "parents [are] like [an] umbrella" (Recorded conversation, January 12, 2007). He asked if I had heard of this saying before and when I replied that I had not, he went on to explain that the wife and mother of the family is like the "everything" or frame of the umbrella while the husband and father is its actual "cover." He furthered this image by stating that if one piece of the umbrella is missing then "underneath [the] kids will get…wet, you know?" (Recorded conversation, January 12, 2007).

Although I remembered vividly the manner in which Tai-shan explained the chopstick and umbrella metaphors in addition to the way Li-ying described the reliable "big shoulder" of her husband, I was still not fully awake to the significance of these metaphors, other than that the ideals of family and home seemed important to them both. It was not until the middle of March that I began to think more carefully about the metaphors Tai-shan and Li-ying shared with me on two different occasions. On this particular afternoon, a wet March day, I asked Lilly if I could call her mother after school as I was hoping to plan with Li-ying our next conversation. Lilly said her mother was picking her and Cole up right after the bell, and she suggested I could talk to her directly if I wanted to (Field notes, March 12, 2007).

Immediately after the final bell for the day Lilly and I walked outside and waited for her mother to arrive. Li-ying arrived quickly and after exchanging greetings and small talk, I asked if I might be able to come to their home and visit them again. Li-ying explained that since Tai-shan was going to China on a business trip it would be some time before he would be back. Although I received the impression she thought it would be good if her husband was present, at the time, I thought she was saying this out of consideration for me. In my haste to try and be helpful, I informed her that this was not a problem and we could meet on our own (Field notes, March 12, 2007).

Two days later during a lunchtime conversation with Lilly I mentioned to Lilly I had a thank you card for her mother. In response Lilly quickly replied "for the family?" Attuned to the questioning tone of Lilly's voice when she asked if the card was for her mother or for her family, I realized my unintended mistake and replied "for your…family [and] for your mom" because "it was so nice just to talk to her the other day. And I was really glad she told me that your dad…might be away in April" (Recorded conversation, March14, 2007).

What I had missed in January with Tai-shan and in March with Li-ying, I learned quickly from Lilly and her tone of voice. Although I had been trying to be helpful and what I believed was accommodating to Li-ying's and Tai-shan's schedules, what I was not attending to was Li-ying's desire, expressed on the afternoon I met her outside the school, to have Tai-shan present while we talked. Later in that same conversation with Lilly, Lilly emphasized to me we should "plan a time which like… [fits] everyone's schedules" to which I replied she was "absolutely right" (Recorded conversation, March

14, 2007). My realization might not have occurred had not Lilly and her earlier question about the thank you card disrupted my inattentiveness.

Placing the moments I lived with Li-ying and Tai-shan alongside the moment Lilly questioned me about the thank you card allows me to reconsider once again Lilly and me at the book fair. As I was a friend of her teacher's and an individual who spent a lot of time in her classroom, it seemed Lilly understood me as someone who needed help on that particular day as I did not have Song's guidance. Perhaps, as well, like her family who would later welcome me into their home, Lilly understood herself as someone who should spend time with me and welcome me into a place that was, for her, familiar and known, a place where she lived relationally with her teacher and classmates. Additionally, as well, possibly much like the metaphoric language Tai-shan chose to use, Lilly also understood herself as part of the umbrella which supported Song's class. I, as a member of her classroom, needed her attention the day my friend, Song, was away. Possibly, while Song was present in the classroom, Lilly understood Song as the umbrella, the "everything", which supported and "covered" her and her classmates. A thought which makes me wonder now, with Song absent and me in her stead, which part of the umbrella had Lilly sought to be[84]?

Lilly's Sense of Belonging: Known in the Way She Lived with Others

> I know I belong when I spend time with my anties [*sic*] and grandma and grandpa like the time I went biking with my grandpa and the time we had

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[84] In conversation with Lilly's family about the umbrella metaphor and the day of the book fair, Tai-shan agreed with my interpretation of this moment. He also suggested it was possible Lilly was attempting to be the whole umbrella (Field notes on conversation, October 5, 2007).

> lunch with my anties [*sic*] and my brother never [let] me out of his sight when I [was] really small that made me feel like I belong to my family. (Lilly's writing, February 14, 2007)

Throughout our lunchtime conversations as well as our informal chats in the classroom during the school year, Lilly's understanding of relationships was a topic which frequently arose. In late March, on a day I was hoping Lilly and I might chat about belonging in relation to a piece of her writing, I assumed that Lilly would eventually include not only her family members, but also Ella and her many friendships in the classroom (Field notes on conversation, March 21, 2007). Before Lilly and I began this discussion, belonging was something that had also been on my mind and, in particular, how I belonged in Lilly's school.

During this sequence of conversation I did not need to ask Lilly for details, once she began speaking about her writing she concentrated upon Cole. Building upon her statement that Cole "always took care of [her]" as a baby, she explained this meant he "was always…keeping a[n] eye on [her]", particularly it seemed, when she and her family were outside their home. Although she was now older, Lilly made it clear that she felt Cole had not stopped looking after her because he still "help[ed] [her] learn" (Recorded conversation, March 21, 2007). It seemed belonging for Lilly was relational, known in the way she lived with others.

Earlier in the week prior to this conversation about belonging with Lilly, I had the opportunity to hear her speak about belonging in a more metaphorical manner. In this particular moment, the children, working in partners, were deep in conversation about belonging and how it was symbolized in the book *The Lotus*

Seed (Garland, 2001). As I watched the lively exchanges occurring about the room, I observed that the children were not only discussing the book just read, but were also bringing up examples they felt represented belonging in their own lives (Field notes, March 19, 2007).

Soon after the children had talked in pairs, a whole class discussion commenced. The examples shared with the larger group were interesting and diverse. Lilly took her time before she volunteered. Her voice was soft and Song encouraged her to speak a little more loudly so that everyone in the room could hear. On her second attempt, Lilly explained she thought belonging was like butter and if you do not pay attention to the person you love, this person, like butter which is not attended to, may just melt away (Field notes, March 19, 2007).

Although I wrote that I "loved Lilly's example" (Field notes, March 19, 2007), admittedly, I was more caught up in the every day routines of the classroom as opposed to considering moments such as these in temporal relation to Lilly and other events. Revisiting this moment again, while also taking into consideration the day Lilly spoke to me about Tyler, a friend who was moving away, adds another layer to my understanding about Lilly. Perhaps, because Lilly, as noted in her description of Cole and how he took care of her, understood belonging as based upon active moments lived with another person. She was able to express this in the way she wished for Tyler that she "hoped his new friends would be nice to him."

As I wonder about the possibilities underlying Lilly's intentions during these moments spread across the school year, I am also aware of a second point to Lilly's comment about Tyler. Tagged on at the end of her wish for Tyler and how she hoped his new friends would be nice to him, Lilly commented that she knew "sometimes friends could be mean to one another and she hoped that wouldn't happen to Tyler." Although I cannot discount Lilly's observation, having been in schools for a number of years where I witnessed the arrival of newcomers, I am surprised that Lilly spoke knowledgably about it as Lilly had only ever attended one school. Perhaps, Lilly's comment was based upon her own observations of new children at Streamside. Yet, at the same time, her remark also caused me to wonder if Lilly's school days were as free from tension as I had once assumed.

Building up the Butter: Lilly's Emphasis Upon Attentiveness in Relationships

Two days later in conversation with Lilly, my memory of her butter metaphor was still strongly present in my mind. Towards the latter end of our lunch hour I returned to the example she had shared with the class and said "so you were talking about the butter symbol the other day" (Recorded conversation, March 21, 2007). Lilly, following my lead, responded "like sometimes…when you leave…butter alone it will just melt away like your belonging with a friend." I told her I thought this might mean "if you want your friend to belong and if you want to feel like you belong it's kind of like you have to pay attention" (Recorded conversation, March 21, 2007).

It was at this moment that our conversation turned away from the abstract and to an example in Lilly's life as she explained how she had felt when her friend Ella went on a month long trip to Brunei to visit relatives. Lilly said "I really miss[ed] Ella…[it] felt like…she melted away somewhere else." I asked if she meant when Ella went on her trip to Brunei. Lilly replied "Yeah, because [she] keep[s] building it back up in Brunei--

because her family members were always paying attention to her." Uncertain as to what Lilly meant by "building it back up", I used her butter metaphor and asked if this meant Ella "was able to build up the butter in Brunei?" To which Lilly affirmatively replied "Mmmhmm" (Recorded conversation, March 21, 2007).

In a subsequent conversation with Lilly while she was explaining the photographs she had taken for the citizenship education project, the topic of belonging and Lilly's butter symbol once again came up in our discussion. As Lilly pulled a photograph she had taken of a stick of butter from her pile of pictures she said "I think you remember what I said about butter" (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007). I replied I did, but I encouraged her to tell me again. I started her off by saying "It's like…if you don't pay attention to your friends" and Lilly answered "they might [not]…want to be your friends and melt [away] to somewhere else….and [it] builds up at another place with another friend." From Lilly's explanation it seemed Lilly meant that in order to sustain relationships, you need to be attentive to the person you are in a relationship with otherwise you run the risk of losing this personal connection.

Lilly's explanation was reminiscent of what we had previously discussed and so I was not prepared for the sudden turn to tension our conversation took. Immediately after Lilly's statement in which she noted that butter had the possibility of "building up" in "another place with another friend" if you are not attentive, she explained her example was "kind of like moving. It was hard for me to leave the neighborhood …some [where] we were [for] around 7 or 8 years" (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007). The move Lilly was referring to was one which took place in February 2006 when her family moved to a new neighborhood, a place that was only a short distance away from their previous home and Streamside School. In response to Lilly, I asked what she had liked about her old neighborhood. Lilly replied "well, I had so much of my friends [there]… But now I only have two people that I know" (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007).

In early March while in conversation with Li-ying and Lilly, Li-ying confirmed that Lilly had found this move difficult. Li-ying explained that the day they moved Lilly cried and Li-ying noted this was probably because Lilly had lived in that house "since [she] w[as] [a] baby, right?" and, according to Li-ying, it was a place which probably had "all the memories" for Lilly. Elaborating upon her mother's response Lilly pointed out to me she still found this move difficult because "Ella isn't my neighbor" (Recorded conversation, March 1, 2007).

Lilly's emphasis upon how this move to a different neighborhood had been "hard for her" was a topic she brought up periodically throughout the school year[85]. Based upon what I knew, Lilly's new house was in the vicinity of their previous neighborhood and she had not changed schools. Yet, it seemed, Lilly missed her old home because it was place shaped by her memories of Ella and other friends, relationships with memorable beginnings and histories. If this particular experience of Lilly's had been the only story seemingly tension-filled, I, perhaps, would not have picked up on it. Yet, in addition to this story about the move to her new neighborhood, was another move which Lilly often referred to and was a topic that had come up earlier in the school year.

> Song read a little more from *Space Brat* (Coville, 1993) and there was a moment in the book when Glork felt homesick. Song took the opportunity to ask the class if they ever felt homesick. A lot of the children talked about feeling homesick

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[85] In September, 2007, while discussing the ways Lilly missed her former neighborhood, Lilly emphasized to me she still missed her old house even though a lot of time had passed (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

> while they were away at camp or while at a relative's home. Lilly brought up an interesting story about missing Canada while visiting the American city she was born in and missing the United States when back in Canada. (Field notes, December 11, 2006)

In early December during an impromptu classroom discussion about homesickness, Lilly shared she had been born in the United States and on the occasions she visited there she missed home, but once she was home again in Canada she found herself missing the United States (Field notes, December 11, 2006). At the time, I was deeply curious about Lilly's comments. Once I began conversations with her family my curiosity turned to perplexity, for I learned that Lilly had only lived in the United States for a short period of time as a baby (Field notes on conversations, January 12, 2007; March 1, 2007). This was something which continued to puzzle me as Lilly's references to this move were unrelenting and persistently popped up during classroom discussions and lunchtime conversations throughout the school year (Field notes, April 2, 2007; April 4, 2007; February 28, 2007; March 21, 2007, April 18, 2007; April 25, 2007).

These two moves in Lilly's life, although different, seemed to be important to her. The frequency with which Lilly referred to these events led me to later wonder if moving was tension-filled for Lilly. Over time as I grew to know Lilly, it seemed to me it was not necessarily the school landscape which caused her tension; it was, perhaps, the thought of leaving the places and the people she knew which periodically caused her worry. Lilly's concern about growing up and leaving the places she loved reminded me of myself, years ago, when I too used to lie in bed awake at night worried about and wondering what lay beyond the safe borders of my home and school. This was a time when I was trying to imagine who I could be without the people, places, and things I knew. This is where the resemblance ends, however. Lilly's family, unlike my own, have stories of moving away from Taiwan and beginning again, making me later wonder if this was, perhaps, why Lilly was particularly wakeful to her friendships, the stories underlying them, and the few moves she had experienced in her life. It is these moments, moments when Lilly chose to discuss the places she had left behind, that have led me to consider the tensions Lilly was experiencing as she tried to imagine who she might be in the future away from the landscapes she knew and loved so well.

What You Know First: Attending to Lilly's Sense of Her Family's Stories

Over time in conversations with Tai-shan and Li-ying they shared with me what originally motivated them to leave Taiwan and move to the western coast of the United States in 1992. Based upon my own experiences of moving to a different country, I found myself drawn to their vivid accounts of their early years in the United States and later in Canada. In mid January on the evening of our first conversation, Tai-shan spoke candidly about their reasons for leaving Taiwan. He began by stating that "Taiwan's a small country…with a big population…and that's why [we]…decide[d] [to] go to [the] US" (Recorded conversation, January 12, 2007). Tai-shan further explained that "because in [Taiwan]…we work for [our] whole li[ves]", it was for him and Li-ying worth "giv[ing] up everything and then go[ing] there." This move to the United States was so that Tai-shan could complete his PhD. Upon completion of his degree he, Li-ying, Cole, and Lilly moved to Canada in 1998.

The decision to move to the United States was one filled with uncertainty as emphasized by Tai-shan and his memory of a conversation he had with Li-ying. Tai-shan recalled that he said "we['re] stuck in Taiwan and both us working for [our] whole li[ves]...only [able] to [get] [an] apartment...[with a] mortgage. Probably carry [it] around 40 years... So I...tell her let's gamble...Let's go to [the] US you know. If we end up [with] nothing we'll come back" (Recorded conversation, January 12, 2007).

Later in the evening I came back to this period of their lives in the US and asked if he and Li-ying had "any desire to stay [in the US]" because of the amount of time they had lived in the States before their move to Canada. Tai-shan confided there had been opportunities there, but because he had liked the offer made by a Canadian organization, he felt moving would provide him and his family greater opportunities (Field notes on conversation, January 12, 2007). At the end of his explanation Tai-shan burst into laughter as he recalled Li-ying's feelings about this second move. He noted Li-ying did not "want to come. She [had] never sa[id] "no" in my life, that's the first time...she sa[id] "no", [and she asked] why should [we] go to Canada?" (Recorded conversation, January 12, 2007).

In this same conversation, I also learned Tai-shan had only been back to Taiwan once. This surprised me. My surprise was greater, however, when Li-ying told me she had not returned to Taiwan "for 14 years" although her parents visited them every second year. I admitted to them that I found the prospect of never returning to the places I had grown up in daunting and I could not have "imagine[d] [that] for myself when I moved to Turkey." In response to me Tai-shan replied "As...long as we st[i]ck together, there's nothing [we can't] face, you know what I mean?" (Recorded conversation, January 12, 2007).

Still curious about Li-ying and how she felt about their move to Canada, I asked, in a subsequent conversation, what it had been like for her to "take a gamble… [and] move to a new place?" (Recorded conversation, March 1, 2007). Li-ying explained that although she loved her home now, at the time Tai-shan was offered the job in Canada she "actually [hadn't wanted] to come." Her faith in their ultimate decision to move was based upon how Tai-shan felt during his interview with his current supervisor. She clarified by explaining that Tai-shan felt this person was "kind of like the same type of …p[erson] [as himself]." Later on, Li-ying said she no longer missed her home in Taiwan as "my home is here [in Canada], you know?" Curious about why she felt this way I asked her to explain how this feeling had come about and she replied "maybe the [passing of] time" (Recorded conversation, March 1, 2007).

During this particular part of our conversation, Tai-shan was not present, although he joined us later in the evening. Present during these moments were Li-ying, Lilly, Cole, and me. Cole was content to read the transcript of a prior conversation while Li-ying, Lilly, and I talked. I note here who was present during these moments as I feel the conversation took quite a different turn later on. Some time after we talked about Li-ying's feeling about where she now lived, the conversation turned towards me and in particular how my family felt about my move to Turkey. This arose during a moment when I asked Li-ying about her future plans. Li-ying commented that currently her focus was upon "tak[ing] care of two babies, right?" Lilly was not happy about being referred to as a baby and in order to make her feel better I said to Lilly "my mom still calls me a baby sometimes." It was after I said this that our discussion reminded me of other conversational moments that I had lived with Lilly.

> Jen: …my mom still calls me a baby sometimes.
>
> Lilly: Because…
>
> Li-ying: Always forever babies, right?
>
> Jen: …my mother will call me up and I'll be like mom you know I'm almost 37 years old. [And my mother tells me] Yes dear, but…you're still my baby.
>
> Li-ying: [When you] move[d] away your mom must [have] be[en]…
>
> Lilly: Very sad.
>
> Jen: It was difficult, it was difficult…
>
> Lilly: Yeah. (Recorded conversation, March 1, 2007)

In conversation with Lilly at lunch hours, the topic of Taiwan and what Lilly imagined the country was like periodically surfaced. In relation to a conversation we were having about her relatives in Taiwan, Lilly said she thought Taiwan was "a nice place but a little crowded" and emphasized her point again by stating she "want[ed] to visit there too" (Recorded conversation, February 28, 2007). In response to her idea of visiting Taiwan I asked "where would you visit? What would you be interested in?" Lilly replied "maybe my mom['s] [neighborhood]."

In a following conversation, during a discussion we were having about her all-about-me-folder, Lilly pointed out a picture of an airplane. Lilly explained she had "this picture because I like going around. Like I really want to go visit my grandma and grandpa and [to] see what Taiwan looks like." In response to her I asked "What do you imagine? What do you think it might look like?" Lilly replied "I think it has like lots of shops, busy streets…[and] apartments." Interested in the turn our conversation took I asked her what kinds of things she thought she might to do in Taiwan. At this point in our conversation, Lilly's answers became less vague and were more specific. She said she "would like to go to the pool, because there's a pool there…there's a gym there [and] there's a movie theatre in the apartment" and she finished her description by stating "it's very cool" (Recorded conversation, March 14, 2007).

Had I not known better based upon Lilly's vivid description, I would have assumed she was describing a place from a previous trip to Taiwan. Yet, up until and during the time Lilly and I were in conversations, I was aware that neither she nor her brother, Cole, had visited there, leaving me to believe that her telling in this moment was based upon something she had heard from her parents. The possibilities beneath how Lilly knew this particular place reminds me of Lilly in other classroom moments in which the topic of Taiwan and Lilly's family stories surfaced in the classroom. Similar to the way Lilly and Li-ying understood that my move to Turkey was difficult for my mother and me, Lilly, seemingly, also understood that her mother's departure from Taiwan was hard for her mother's parents.

Revisiting Moments of Movement: Lilly's Sense of Landscapes and the Notion of Narrative Unity

> Song read *What You Know First* by Patricia MacLachlan (1998). The children were very attentive to Song as she read the book. The children picked up on the idea of moving away to a different place and what that makes them think and/or feel. Lucas mentioned Tyler (his "best friend") and how he moved away. Nathan talked about moving from his house to a nearby neighborhood. Owen talked about

> moving from his old house to here and later about his move from a large city to the country. Lilly talked about her grandparents in Taiwan and how they must miss her mother who moved to the United States with Lilly's father 14 years ago so her father could attend university. (Field notes, March 14, 2007)

On this particular afternoon in mid March, as part of the citizenship education project's ongoing book discussions, the children were deep in discussion about the book *What You Know First* (MacLachlan, 1998). The narrator and main character of the story is a young girl who has been told by her family that they are to move to a new home far from the prairie landscape she knows. As the children recounted their own experiences with moving, they seemed to strongly identify with the narrator and her reluctance to move.

As Lilly talked about her grandparents in Taiwan and their feelings for Lilly's mother who had left Taiwan 14 years ago, I was touched by the example Lilly shared. Looking back upon this moment and taking into consideration what Lilly actually said, I am drawn to the way she positioned herself from her grandparent's viewpoint. Unlike her classmates who concentrated upon themselves and their own feelings when they moved or when friends had moved away, Lilly, in her telling, imagines that her grandparents must still miss her mother. This was a moment which left me wondering if Lilly was also aware of her mother's feelings and how she missed her parents as well.

A few weeks later at the beginning of April this book *What you Know First* came up again and this time Lilly's response to it was from a directly personal place. Throughout the citizenship education project, many books were read and discussed. On this particular afternoon, Song asked the children to think about which of the books made them think about belonging and to explain why this was so. After a brief discussion, the children went to their desks and wrote down their answers. As I walked about the class, I noted what Lilly had written. In response to Song's request, Lilly wrote the book *What You Know First* taught her about leaving a place you love and this was something she understood because she was from the United States (Field notes, April 2, 2007).

Throughout the school year the emphasis Lilly placed on being from the United States was an identifier which Lilly regularly referred to. At the end of February, during our first lunchtime conversation and Lilly's explanation of her time/lifeline, she took the time to clarify to me the actual location of her birthplace. Lilly noted that what she had written on her lifeline was not correct as the American city she was actually born in is much smaller than the large urban center that she chose to highlight on her time/lifeline. Because where she was born is not as well known as the nearby larger city, Lilly explained, she often referred to the larger one as people seemed to know it better (Field notes on conversation, February 28, 2007).

Three weeks later, in a subsequent conversation with Lilly, while she and I were discussing the possibilities for her all-about-Lilly drawing, Lilly's birthplace once again came up. Lilly explained if she were to sketch a picture of herself she "would draw the words America and Canada" because she "was born in America." In this same moment she explained she also wanted to "visit [her] old house [in the United States]" because she "ha[dn't] stay[ed] for a long [time]" (Recorded conversation, March 21, 2007). Based upon these lunchtime moments with Lilly, it seemed Lilly was aware of the brief length of time she had lived in the United States. It also seemed she was determined to emphasize her connection to this place, particularly in the way she named a well known

American city as her birthplace as she felt people were more familiar with its location than the place she was born in.

Two days after I first read Lilly's response to the book *What You Know First* and her comment that she understood what it was like to leave a place that she loved, I listened to the children share their examples during a whole class discussion. While they talked, I found myself thinking again about Lilly's response and wondering why she insisted upon being connected to the States. Once there was a lull in the discussion, I whispered my question to Jean Clandinin who responded that perhaps it was a story her family kept alive (Field notes, April 4, 2007). At the time, although I knew Jean Clandinin's point was a real possibility, I was also aware of Li-ying's description to me of their trip to the States the previous summer and their disappointment as the places they remembered had felt very different (Field notes on conversation, March 1, 2007). My memory of my conversation with Li-ying in this moment left me to wonder if Lilly's insistence on being from the States was more in relation with her parent's connection to Taiwan. This was a place that Lilly was unfamiliar with and only able to access through her parents' stories (Field notes, April 4, 2007). Why, I wondered, was I puzzled by the importance Lilly seemed to place upon being "born in America"?

As I look back upon these several instances drawn out over the year with Lilly and her family, I am pulled towards multiple possibilities as to why Lilly placed the significance she did upon being from somewhere else. Perhaps, as mentioned, by being from a place other than the Canadian city Lilly and her parents lived in, she felt she had a stronger connection to her parents as they too were from away. Perhaps, as well, by being from a foreign country, she also felt a deeper bond with her family in Taiwan, relatives who lived in a distant place and who she believed still missed her parents and her and Cole as well. As I observed throughout the school year in the classroom and in conversations, it was narratively coherent (Carr, 1986) for Lilly to live in relation with the individuals of her personal landscapes, at home and at school, something which also made me believe she was trying to live in relation with her relatives across the ocean. Taking these previous moments into consideration, I am also left to wonder, however, about those instances in which Lilly sought to sustain her sense of narrative unity (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988) as a Chinese-Canadian girl born in America, living in Canada with connections to a distant cultural landscape.

"I Learn More Words Every Day": Attending to Lilly's Relational Sense of her Cultural Heritage on the Classroom Landscape

In late February I arrived one afternoon to the classroom to learn that Song had planned Chinese New Year's festivities for the children in recognition of events which had occurred over the weekend. Written on the board was the phrase 'Happy New Year' and across from it were two translations in Mandarin and Cantonese. Soon after Song and I had exchanged greetings and I heard about the plan for that afternoon: the giving of these gifts, the reading of a new book about Chinese New Year, as well as calligraphy painting. As we chatted, I heard Lilly and Hailey on the announcements wishing the entire school a Happy New Year in Mandarin and Cantonese.

Later in the afternoon once the new book had been read aloud and discussed, Song and Lilly handed out red shiny envelopes to everyone in the room. Inside these colorful packages were pieces of chocolate money. The room soon erupted to the sounds of paper tearing and giggles as the children joyfully peeled open the envelopes and ate the chocolate inside. Song explained this gift was known as lai see in Cantonese or 'hóng bāo' in Mandarin, and that usually only individuals who were married gave this kind of gift. As she was not married, Song pointed out, she and Lilly were doing something a little different. Song then shared with the children the recent conversation she and Lilly had about these gifts. As Lilly and Song both wanted to give everyone in the class a gift for Chinese New Year, they had decided that it would be okay if they did something a little different by giving lai see/'hóng bāo' together. During Song's explanation while the children's eyes were attentively upon her, I was also drawn to Lilly standing next to Song and the quiet smile stretched across Lilly's face (Field notes, February 20, 2007).

During our lunchtime conversations, Lilly's understanding of her cultural heritage periodically arose during our discussions. These moments often came up in relation to Lilly's father, Tai-shan, as he frequently traveled to China as part of his responsibilities at work. In April I was aware that Tai-shan was to go to China on one of his many business trips and during a conversation, I asked Lilly if he had already left to which Lilly replied "he went to China…last Friday, Friday the 13th" (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007). In response to the news that he had left on "Friday the 13th" I exclaimed "wow, was he nervous?" Out of kindness for my belief that this particular day is unlucky Lilly replied "I think so", but went on to gently assert that my understanding was culturally based by saying "but 13 is a lucky number." Understanding I was being shortsighted in some way, I asked her to explain what she meant. Lilly explained that in "the western part…they believe that…13 is [a] bad luck day…and in the eastern [part]…it's a good luck number" (Recorded conversation, April 18, 2007).

In this moment Lilly was happy to teach me something I had been previously unaware of and I knew from prior conversations that Lilly also had a deep interest in learning more about her cultural background as expressed in her desire to travel to Taiwan as well as China. In an earlier conversation, Lilly told me that in the future her father might take her and the rest of the family to China for a visit. Lilly explained this was something she wanted to do as there was a "temple" she wanted to see as well as the "Great Wall of China" (Recorded conversation, February 28, 2007). Although Lilly was enthusiastic about the idea of this future trip, in this moment she also seemed hesitant about the types of things she might see and do while there. In response to what I perceived as her uncertainty, I attempted to shift the conversation back to her home and asked "when you're at home do you speak in Mandarin with your parents?" Lilly replied "yeah mostly all the time", but clarified she spoke predominantly English with her brother as she did not "understand all of [Mandarin]." She went on to remind me that this was because she and Cole had been "born in [an American city] like I told you." I replied "I imagine if you keep talking with your parents [your Mandarin] will get stronger and stronger." Nodding her head Lilly agreed and explained that she "learn[ed] more words every day" (Recorded conversation, February, 28, 2007).

Over time as I learned more about Lilly's sense of her cultural origins, I began to wonder if one of the ways she maintained her understanding of her heritage was by speaking and learning Mandarin at home with her family. Coming to know Lilly in the ways I did, I was curious about her attempts to relationally bring this part of herself into the classroom. In late February I observed Lilly and Song give traditional Chinese New Year's gifts to each member of the class. In this moment they celebrated their shared sense of cultural heritage, while they also shaped the cultural expectations around the giving of lai see/ 'hóng bāo' to suit their relationship. It seemed Lilly strongly identified with Song and their shared cultural origins. On Valentine's Day in response to Dana's story that someone had once told Dana her traditions were "weird", Lilly responded to Dana that this had not happened to her, but that she, like Dana, also celebrated different things. Lilly went on to give an example and explained she and Song celebrate Chinese New Year (Field notes, February 14, 2007).

Growing Wakeful to Lilly's Sense of World Travel[86]

Throughout the school year, Song often shared with the children stories from her own background as a child who grew up in a series of small rural towns and whose family was often the only Chinese-Canadian family living there (Field notes, December 11, 2006; February 20, 2007; March 8, 2007; March 15m 2007; March 16, 2007). Thinking about Song and her childhood stories in relation with Lilly I am drawn to wondering if this was why, possibly, Lilly seemingly had such a strong connection to Song. Perhaps, Lilly was wondering who she, a Chinese-Canadian girl, could be on a Canadian landscape. Lilly's relationship with Song was significant to her as demonstrated by the moment in which she and Song commemorated Chinese New Year with her classmates and also in the way she pointed out to Dana the holidays she and Song celebrated. Perhaps, because Song's cultural background resonated with Lilly, Lilly saw

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[86] Lugones (1987) writes about world travel as a possible way of understanding others lovingly and not arrogantly. To arrogantly perceive an individual is to fail to identify with them; world travel is impossible if individuals are positioned in ways that do not acknowledge their multiplicity. Lugones wrote that "traveling to someone's "world" is a way of identifying with them…because by traveling to their "world" we can understand *what it is to be them and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes*" (emphasis in the original, p.17). Lugones's notion of world travel provides me with insight into the ways Lilly strove to understand the people she was in relationship with by asking questions and attempting to view their understanding of the world from their perspectives.

Song, an individual who was proud of her heritage, as someone who she could be like in the future[87].

I believe there were also other moments with Song that resonated with Lilly. At times, in relation to her childhood stories, Song talked about her understanding of world travel (Lugones, 1987) and how this notion allowed her to journey to other people's worlds by drawing upon her own experiences while imagining theirs (Field notes, March 16, 2007). Might Lilly, in her ongoing efforts to negotiate and interact with the members of her classroom community, recognize Song's point as something in which she, too, also believed? Might Lilly have understood from Song that sharing who you are with people was also a part of learning about them? Possibly under Song's guidance and in relation with her, Lilly was beginning to understand there were other ways of sharing her cultural heritage outside of her Canadian home, ways that embraced Lilly's multiplicity as she knowingly lived with those around her.

This particular thought draws me to another moment with Lilly at the end of the school year to a day on which she and her classmates shared their cultural traditions. Lilly, Ella and Ella's younger brother, Michael, performed for the class a lion dance, dressed in a traditional lion dance costume. Ella was at the back of the puppet and Michael was at the front as the lion's head. Once the music started it became apparent that Michael did not want to dance. Lilly, who was standing in front of Michael, enticed him to dance by waving a hand-woven fish in front of him. Lilly later explained to the class that this fish, a particular Taiwanese decoration, was used at Chinese New Year celebrations as told to by her mother. When Lilly held up this fish in front of Michael, he snapped at it shaking his great lion's head to and fro to the delight of Lilly's classmates (Field notes, June 27, 2007).

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[87] In September, 2007, Lilly was wearing a new pair of eyeglasses, a pair she had picked out for herself. Lilly said she thought her new eyeglasses were like the ones Ms. Lee wore (Field notes on conversation, September 14, 2007).

As I think about this moment in June and lay it alongside that moment in February with Song and Lilly as they celebrated Chinese New Year with the class, I am struck by the resonance of both while I also note something different. In February, Lilly followed Song's lead as Song created this opportunity to share with the class who she and Lilly were. In that instance as Song explained to the children why she and Lilly had decided to give these small gifts, Lilly stood quietly next to her, smiling and occasionally nodding her head in agreement. At the end of the school year, in the moment when Michael showed some reluctance to fully participate in the lion dance and perform for Lilly's classmates, Lilly stepped in and encouraged him to dance by waving the hand woven fish just out of his reach. Perhaps, in this moment, Lilly knew Michael was shy of dancing in front of a group of children who were older than he was. Perhaps, as well, Lilly knew if she participated in the dance by teasing Michael, the lion, Michael might feel more willing to take part[88].

Coming to understand Lilly in the ways that I did, I believe, Lilly knowingly attended to the people she was in relationship with and understood the complexity of the school landscape she was situated within. Thinking about Lilly as she enticed the lion to dance, a lion composed of her friends, in front of a group of children and adults who she also referred to as friends, I am struck, once again, by her knowing and the ways she attended to others as she also shared who she was[89]—a daughter, a best friend, a sister, a granddaughter, a niece, a student, and, in many ways, a world traveler…

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[88] In March, 2008, as I shared this moment with Lilly and her family, Lilly said she remembered helping Michael "feel less nervous" in front of her classmates (Field notes on conversation, March 14, 2008).

Do You Have Any Special Memories? [90]

I want to be an artist
I draw at home.
My auntie and me love to draw together.

I know you like to draw
If we were to draw…an all about Lilly drawing…
I wonder what you would draw if...we were doing yours.

We learn…things about each other when we're drawing…
Things we both like to do together.
Might help us think of other stories…
That's the good thing about drawing.

I'm Lilly the fortune teller.
Maybe we could do a future thing—for you…
Like our soul goes into the future...
Imagine…
Some future things about you too.

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[89] In March, 2008, as I visited Lilly's family, I learned from Lilly that she and the entire family had returned for Taiwan for a two week visit in January. That same evening I asked Tai-shan about their trip and their reasons for going. Tai-shan told me that it had been "time" for Lilly and Cole to see the country their parents are from. In the photograph that Lilly shared with me is Li-ying's family—her three sisters, their spouses, children, her parents, and one of Li-ying's cousins. Lilly is seated in the front and kneeling next to her "favorite" cousin. Cole is seated beside Lilly. Li-ying and Tai-shan are standing in the back on the right hand side of the group (Field notes on conversation, March 14, 2008).

[90] The poem is based upon Lilly's way of knowing. Using excerpts from our lunchtime conversations, I attempt to convey the back and forth quality of our discussions. This poem was developed around the way Lilly insisted on including me in her identity artifact drawing, a drawing that I originally planned to only be about her. Lilly's words are in italics.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Attending to the Relational Tensions of Children's Lives

Movement Across and Upon Multiple Landscapes: The Notion of Relational Tensions as Individuals' Stories to Live by Meet and Bump

Chapter one depicts my journey to the beginnings of this inquiry. Yet, my travels did not end there once I entered into Song's classroom. There were numerous trips: flights between Edmonton and Ankara and Edmonton and Moncton as well as bus journeys to and from Streamside School and the children's homes. I was conscious of my movement between these distinct landscapes as well as the accompanying act of entering into and departing from them. Being attentive to the movement in my life was essential as I considered my relationships and the contexts in which they are situated. The relational push and pull of multiple contexts creates tension, for I find it challenging to attend to one relationship, one distinct landscape without being mindful of others. Invisible and quiet these traversed distances entered alongside me while I was in Song's classroom, the children's homes, and later while I wrote about them. Thinking about the multiplicity shaping my life was helpful as I thought about the children, mindful of their interactions within curriculum making[91].

As I considered the ways the children negotiated their lives in the classroom, I began to think about tension as contextually situated and always present upon school landscapes due to the relational shifts that continually occur. Tension carries with it a connotation of tightness. Sometimes, however, people are not awake to the tensions they experience nor are they awake to the tensions of others. Moving upon a school landscape creates relational shifts and tensions fluctuate within these movements, sometimes apparent and sometimes not. Abrupt relational shifts sometimes awaken us to the tensions being experienced by ourselves and others.

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[91] People living on landscapes and landscapes living in people is a way of thinking about individuals as leading storied lives on storied landscapes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2006). A narrative inquiry is understood to be about inquiring into individuals' expressed and understood stories. In the way I understand my life narratively, so, too, do I understand the lives of the children as multiple stories in the process of being constructed and told (Bateson, 1989; Carr, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, 2006; Coles, 1989, Crites, 1971; Kerby, 1991).

Drawing upon the notion of "bumping places" (Clandinin et al., 2006) as a way to think about relational tensions experienced in people's lives allowed me to understand when and where Owen's, Dana's, and Lilly's stories to live by, met and intersected with others' in the classroom. Looking across the children's narrative accounts, I was struck by the tensions that lingered and resonated among them around their negotiations within curriculum making. Drawing upon the children's narrative accounts, and playing with the idea that tension is always relational upon landscapes that are never static, in what follows I explore the ways these relational tensions shaped the children's lives.

Understanding Tensions as They Occur Between and Upon Landscapes

A simple search of the word "tension" in the Oxford Online Dictionary defines it as the following:

> **noun 1** the state of being tense. **2** mental or emotional strain. **3** a situation in which there is conflict or strain because of differing views, aims, or elements. **4** the degree of stitch tightness in knitting and machine sewing. **5** voltage of specified magnitude: *high tension*." (Emphasized and bolded items in original)

Drawing upon this definition as a starting point, I narrow my focus and concentrate temporarily upon tension as "a situation in which there is conflict or strain because of differing views, aims, or elements." While I agree with its depiction, left to this description alone, the notion of tension in relation with the children's stories to live by loses its complexity. According to this definition, experienced tension is temporally limited to a one time experience, problematic because tension viewed in this light seems decontextualized from the temporal, contextual, and experiential of the children's lives and their classroom landscape. Informed solely by this notion, the tensions I saw the children as experiencing lose their richness and appear as singular incidents rather than pointing towards experiential threads informing and shifting the children's stories to live by. This particular definition as well does not assign ownership to these "differing views, aims, or elements." The result is the loss of the relational. Yet, in my understanding of the tensions experienced by the children, these tensions were deeply, relationally situated.

Owen spoke of his initial discomfort with the room in which we were having our lunchtime conversations. This was seen in the questions he asked me during our first lunch hour conversation and later in the way he confided to Song that he was concerned people might be wondering about his presence in that particular room. Later Owen talked about his experiences in his former school, a place where, at times, he felt he needed to reveal his intelligence to his peers as a way to disrupt the stories he felt they were telling about him. By moving our relationship away from the classroom context and down the hallway to another room, I not only unknowingly positioned Owen between landscapes I also unintentionally created a bumping place between us. This was a moment in which Owen, unknowing of the room and its history, hovered between home, former school contexts, and the new room, a moment which led him to asking me questions and later confiding in Song about his concerns.

Dana talked about her dislike for her first all-about-me folder created in September. Throughout the fall her aversion for the folder was a topic she mentioned in passing. However on the day she knew we were going to concentrate upon it as a conversational source, her dislike for the folder was announced loudly and physically in the way she placed it face down on the table in front of me. To understand Dana's feelings about the folder I returned temporally to the end of September, the period of time in which it was created and which also marked Dana's arrival to Song's classroom. By bringing this artifact into our conversation as something to be focused upon I was bringing to light Dana's discomfort with not only an unfinished piece of work, but also a time when she was new to the classroom and uncertain of how others storied her. Again, like the bumping place I created with Owen, this too was another moment when I, in my focus upon this artifact, generated tension between Dana and me.

Lilly differed from Dana and Owen, in that the known landscapes in her life were more firmly connected to Streamside School and two different houses in nearby neighborhoods. Tension emerged during one of our lunchtime conversations when Lilly made it known it had been hard for her to move from her old neighborhood because it was a place full of friends unlike the new neighborhood in which she lived. The changing of home landscapes seemed to be something tension-filled for Lilly and was a topic she returned to during our conversations and classroom discussions. Her emphasis upon this led me to Lilly's family stories and her knowledge of her family's move from Taiwan to the United States and then to Canada. Interwoven within these stories is the narrative of Lilly's mother who, at the time of our conversations, had not returned to Taiwan since their departure, and Lilly's own wonders about Taiwan, the landscape of her cultural heritage. While Lilly moved knowingly upon her home and school landscapes, the landscapes of unknown contexts like her birthplace in the United States and her cultural home in Taiwan seemed to influence her relational knowledge and wonders. Lilly's desire to have her different places of origin acknowledged by me created bumping places between us. By not initially recognizing her emphasis upon her spatial and cultural origins I arrogantly perceived (Lugones, 1987) Lilly and what I understood as important about her.

Troubling the Concept of Tension in Search of a Richer Notion

While I wrote about Owen, Dana, and Lilly, I was conscious of their individuality, the threads informing their stories to live by, and how they negotiated understanding for themselves in the classroom. Reflecting upon their interactions with others reminds me of the tension-filled moments that held my attention and directed me in my understanding of the ways they negotiated their lives in curriculum making. Looking for a richer notion of tension as something that relationally occurs, I begin with Clandinin et al.'s (2006) description of working with field texts and being drawn to moments of tension. Utilizing the metaphor of lives bumping into one another, to describe instances manifested by tensions, they write about "moments of tension and places of tension in people's experiences" and the shaping of these bumps by others and school within the "nestedness" of a school landscape's stories (p.35). Clandinin et al. direct my focus to the situated connectedness of experiences and relationships to tension and the influence they have upon the shifting stories people tell of themselves, of each other, and of school.

Adding to my understanding of relational tension is Caine and Steeves (2007), and their figurative use of a kite image to represent "the space in-between the researcher and research participant" (p.1). The authors portray the researcher as the kite flyer and the research participant as the kite, and their relationship, the space in-between, as connected by the kite's string[92]. As a formative part of this space between kite and kite flyer is tension in the ways it "makes [researcher and research participant] stretch, stretch to understand, to engage and to find openings into stories to live by" (p.2). For Caine and Steeves, research relationships are about "a process of being in relation, of tension and a process of becoming" (p.2).

Thinking about tension as the bumping of lives and as essential to relationships moves me closer to conceptualizing what I mean by relational tension. Returning to the image of tension as lives bump against other lives and/or institutional narratives makes me wonder about the act of bumping. How do lives bump? What kinds of bumps occur when people's lives come into contact? In that bumping moment do the threads that inform people's stories to live by catch hold of others'? Do individuals' stories to live by strike and smoothly release? Thinking about the bumping of lives brings to mind images of objects and how they might meet if brought together. A boat arriving to dock initially bumps and bounces back, both the boat and the dock in this moment are protected by the fenders which line the perimeters of each and the slow momentum of the boat as it arrives. The point of impact between two moving cars, however, can bring about a crash leaving in its wake jagged indentations, in this case metal tearing metal, whereas the blow of two pillows in a vigorous pillow fight leaves little damage incurred to either. It seems the nature of objects coming into contact as well as their momentum also determine the type of bumps that may occur. For example, sticky objects like two glue covered Popsicle sticks will meet and pull gluey threads from one another when they are hauled apart. Dry leaves on a windy day will skitter across a sidewalk, but not leave, in most cases, pieces of themselves behind. In this case, however, the leaves are brought into contact with the sidewalk by the wind, a point which reminds me of the tensions which enter people's lives as a result of the landscape in which they are situated (Huber & Whelan, 2000). These examples convey the bumping of lives during moments when tension is palpable; yet, I believe, relational tensions are also something that occurs in an ongoing manner. Much like the rapid beat of a sailboat as it moves across a body of water. Some part of its hull is always immersed; the course the boat takes is shaped by its relationship with the water.

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[92] In their discussion Caine and Steeves (2007) note that the research participant and researcher may also exchange their positions as a way to emphasize the collaborative nature of narrative inquiry.

In conversation with Jean Clandinin about the types of bumps that may occur as people's lives meet, she spoke of a rock being dropped into a pool of water. The rock sinks, yet the point of collision between rock and water may be seen in the ripples which flood outwards, farther from the point where the rock and water actually met. Reminiscent of this image is Huber, Huber, and Clandinin's (2004) notion of narrative interlappings. They wrote:

> As we worked through the two moments of tension we came to see that narrative interlappings are also a way to understand the living of stories. We cannot understand a moment where a teacher researcher's and child's story to live by bump up against each other without trying to understand how this moment of bumping reverberates back through the stories of each person. (p.194)

From their depiction it seems the meeting of lives in this instance may be something which reverberates back across individuals' stories, possibly shifting their stories to live by. The possibilities to be found within the context of lives bumping are endless and are as unique as the individuals meeting and shaping these moments, as are the landscapes in which they are situated.

Thinking about the nature of people's lives bumping leads me to wonder about tension in a classroom context. Caine and Steeves (2007) suggest being in relation is about "creating the right tension" (p.8), a process where "the right tension on the [kite] string speaks to the need to cultivate a space in which imaginings and wide awakeness can unfold" (p.8). When I consider this metaphor within a classroom context, a setting composed of multiple individuals in numerous relationships situated upon a storied landscape also shaped by institutional narratives, I ask: What then of the kite, the kite flyer, and the space in-between? This singular relational image becomes transformed positioned within the landscape of a classroom. It speaks to the contextual complexity of children's and teachers' lives as they attempt to create the right tension in response to ever present relational tensions.

Adding to a classroom's relational complexities is the school landscape in which it is situated. For example, Huber and Whelan (2000) inquired into their experiences living relationally as doctoral students on a university landscape. They experienced tension in the ways their study disrupted others' expectations of graduate students and programs. This tension entered into their relationship and moved them to think of the spaces, the borderlands, they occupied. The authors write of their experience and each other as "a relationship in which our thoughts and words, feelings and interpretations of our worlds have become entangled…bringing [forth] an intense knowing of the *other*" (italics in original, p.115). They emphasize their "knowing" was "textured, knotted, and frayed by [their] difference" (p.115). Huber and Whelan's work help me to appreciate the tension involved in the composition of new relational stories to live by, particularly when they disrupt the dominant stories of particular landscapes.

Drawing upon these scholars' notions of tension, I understand relational tension as contributing to the storied nestedness (Clandinin et al., 2006; Murphy, 2004) of school landscapes, moments when people's stories to live by bump against others' stories to live by and/or institutional narratives. Relational tensions not only shape contexts, they may also shape people's identities in educative or mis-educative (Clandinin et al., 2006; Dewey, 1938) ways[93]. That experiences may be mis-educative or educative emphasizes the interconnectedness of experience and context in relation with an individual's stories to live by. Pinning down the ways an experience may shape an individual's identity is challenging, if not impossible, however. The ways experiences possibly shape people's understanding of themselves subtly occurs over time, something which emphasizes the degree of attentiveness narrative inquiry demands.

Because a classroom context is a site of individuals' interactions, all moments are filled with unique relational tensions and are particular to its dynamic landscape. The nature of people's lives bumping is not something which may be categorized, moments such as these live in relation with people's experiences, landscapes, and their attempts to negotiate what they know of themselves with others.

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[93] Dewey (1938), commenting upon the nature of experience, wrote "any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience" (p.25). Dewey posited that experiences live in relation with the principles of continuity, interaction, and situation and that these "provide the measure of the educative experience and value of an experience" (p.45). Drawing upon Dewey's work, Clandinin et al. (2006) discuss the challenges they experienced as they tried to understand the nature of bumping places and "whether a bump reverberated in educative or mis-educative ways" (p.35). This led them to attending carefully to the children, teachers, and administrators they worked with as a way "to see how stories to live by were shifted, changed, or interrupted" (Clandinin et al., p.36) over time.

The Nature of Liminal Places and Attending to Individuals' Experiences Within Them

Attending to the children and the ways they negotiated their identities within curriculum making was challenging. My understanding of the children unfolded over time while observing their interactions with others in and outside the classroom and later as I worked with field texts. Attempting to attend to the children in school and in field texts was, of course, two different things. The hurried pace of classroom life added to the challenge of attending to Lilly, Dana, and Owen. I wanted to be present for each of them, in companionable and patient ways (Bateson, 1994), but I was also mindful of my relationships with Song and the other children. They, too, needed my attention and in the classroom I attempted "to live with a skin-tingling kind of awakeness to all that was happening" (Clandinin et al., 2006, p.31).

The opportunity to slow down and think carefully did not occur until I left the classroom. I awakened to the ways the children's particularities informed those moments I saw as tension-filled for them in their classroom curriculum making. Attending in this manner I asked questions and noted the importance of in and out-of-classroom places (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) in the children's stories. Why were some places bumping places for the children and others not? What shifts occurred in their stories to live by as a result of these bumps? What shifts occurred that I could not perceive? How did entering liminal places contribute to the children's sense of the relational tensions they were experiencing?

Working with field texts and taking particular notice of tension-filled moments within the children's curriculum making, Helibrun's notion of liminality further enriched my understanding. Heilbrun (1999) defines liminality as a "threshold" a place "between destinies" not "designed for permanent occupation" (p. 101-102). Here, Heilbrun writes, women "choose to be…among the alternatives that present themselves" (p.102), a position in which they "write [their] own lines and, eventually, [their] own plays" (p.102). In my understanding of the children's school experiences, particularly when I think of them moving upon the landscape of Streamside School, Heilbrun's metaphor of a threshold conveys that sense of temporarily hovering in place, between landscapes. Within Heilbrun's notion is the sense that the threshold is a place of empowerment away from societal conformity. I do not think of the threshold as a place the children wished to hover within, however, due to the uncertainty it seemed to generate for each of them.

While I have chosen to align my understanding of liminality as places which the children entered into, other scholars have written about liminality in terms of space. Lundberg (2000), writing about her own experiences as an anthropologist, suggests field work "is a space out of the ordinary, a liminal space—foreign and fantastic…"(p.28), a space where prior self-understandings are annihilated making room for new self growth. Kennedy (2001), inquiring into cultural constructions of whiteness alongside three classroom teachers, writes about liminality as spaces which "reflect[ed]…different way[s] of being in the classroom (p.137), spaces where they "engage[d] with future possibilities" (p.130). Both of these scholars draw my attention to the different ways liminality is understood as spatially oriented and contributing to the reshaping of a person's sense of self. These liminal spaces, according to Lundberg and Kennedy, do not take on known ways of being in the world, yet they contribute to new self-understandings.

Johnston and Mangat (2003) in their discussion of contemporary Canadian picture books and Canadian identity write of the "possibilities for a kind of 'postethnic' perspective in liminal spaces between text and image that illuminate cultural encounters" (p. 203). Their work enables me to see the connection between text/image and cultural encounters as spaces of liminality, where readers' attempt to locate their cultural understanding within a text/image context. Liminality in this sense, as explained by the authors, is one of spatial possibility, a space "of imagination and transformation" (p.201).

Bettis and Adams (2005), emphasizing the concept of liminality as essential to their understanding of female adolescent identity, assert "we see the liminal spaces of being an adolescent and of being female as offering possibilities, uncertainties, play, and performance" (p.6). Their understanding of liminality is also extended to places in schools and suggest hallways, cafeterias, stairwells, as well as buses are examples of spaces shaped by liminality in that they are "transitory in who controls them is always shifting" (p.11). Schools, as suggested by these scholars are composed of liminal spaces[94], and contribute to the unfolding identities of adolescent girls conforming to and resisting societal expectations. Although I distinguish my understanding of liminality as situated in place, the aforementioned work was helpful in my thinking about the undefined nature of liminal spaces as sites of possibility, spaces where individuals attempt to locate their understanding of themselves in relation with others.

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[94] In my reading of Bettis's and Adams's work, I noted the interchangeable way the authors used space and place to convey their understanding of liminality within school contexts and the shifting identities of adolescent girls. They do not seem to distinguish their understanding of space and place and liminality in the ways that other authors do.

In conversation with Jean Clandinin around the nature of liminal places, she commented that she understood them as storyless places where individuals are unable to draw upon their narratives of experience in ways that are meaningful to them. As I thought about what the children were experiencing in liminal places, I saw that liminal places may also be considered places of unknown rhythms. A school landscape, for example, is shaped by routines, ways that are particular to it such as holiday calendars, timetables, and report card periods. Curricular events like a Halloween party have the ability to change the landscape of a classroom and those who move upon it. Entering a school gymnasium has the potential to change people's understandings of themselves in relation with others, particularly if they are not athletically inclined. For those individuals arriving as newcomers to a school landscape, they arrive with rhythms that were developed and maintained within the routines of former school contexts. This highlights to me the significance of landscape within my understanding of the liminal places the children entered into. These were places without known rhythms and stories for the children and which may have contributed to the relational tensions they experienced.

Staying with the idea of liminality as located in place, I return to my conceptual departure point and emphasize the ways Heilbrun (1999) positions her notion of liminality within place:

> The word 'limen' means 'threshold', and to be in a state of liminality is to be poised upon uncertain ground, to be leaving one condition or country or self and entering upon another. But the most salient sign of liminality is its unsteadiness, its lack of clarity about exactly where one belongs and what one should be doing, or wants to be doing. (p.3)

Highlighting the phrase "to be poised upon uncertain ground" I note Heilbrun's use of language to situate liminality and its parameters. Heilbrun suggests this is a place poised in between conditions, countries or selves. I also note her use of the word unsteadiness as a way to describe the saliency of being in a liminal place. Her choice of words is purposeful for the act of being unsteady has a physical connotation, as well as emotional, and cannot be removed from the place in which it occurs. This way of seeing liminality as situated in place draws my attention dually to its indeterminate nature as well as the challenge it is for a person to be hovering on the threshold. The image of the threshold is helpful for understanding the tensions the children experienced within their interactions in classroom curriculum making.

Liminal places are experientially situated. They do not suddenly appear removed from individuals and their experiences; rather, they live in relation with people, their narratives of experience, and their reading of the landscape in which they are situated. Dewey (1938) writes:

> An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his [*sic*] environment…the environment, in other words, is whatever conditions interact with personal, needs, desires, and capacities to create the experience (p.43-44).

In my understanding of the children, particularly Owen and Dana, the liminal places they entered into were places of uncertainty and tensions. Unable to draw upon what they knew, these places emphasized "a lack of clarity" (Heilbrun, 1999, p.3) about where they belonged, what they should do, or what they wanted to do.

Helping me to further understand the nature of liminal places was Clandinin and Connelly's (1995) notion of the professional knowledge landscape. By drawing upon this concept I understood the liminal places the children entered into as situated within in-classroom and out-of-classroom places (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). It also allowed me to think further about the nature of the stories the children told as connected to their entry into liminal places. Their experiences in liminal places were also characterized by the children's attempts to exit from them, actions which may be considered responses to the relational tensions they were experiencing and which, at times, generated more tension for them. Thinking in this manner and hovering in these uncertain, in-between places alongside the children I thought about their relational understandings of the context and situation before them, ways of knowing drawn from prior experiences, routines, and relationships and, for Owen and Dana, from other school contexts.

Moving From the Nature of Liminal Places to the Children's Experiences Within Them

Thinking about landscapes and the ways liminal places are situated within place, reminds me of the first time I arrived at the Ankara Esenboğa Airport, a moment when I was hovering on the threshold (Heilbrun, 1999) of another world informed by stories to live by better suited for another landscape. Since that particular day, subsequent experiences have provided me with new ways to think about my understanding of this moment[95]. This is not to suggest, however, that a person can predict or avoid liminal places. Liminal places by their very nature are elusive as they are contextually, relationally, and temporally situated within landscapes that are always changing. Hovering on the threshold is something which has occurred for me over time in varying ways in different places alongside different people.

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[95] Dewey (1938) writes what a person "has learned in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations which follow" (p.44). Dewey helps me to think about my understanding of my past and present experiences as deeply connected to context and relationships, ways of knowing living in relation with a future yet to occur.

Liminal places are not locations without action. That day in the Ankara Esenboğa Airport actions were performed. Drawing upon what I knew, I collected my luggage, made my way through the final customs check point, and walked outside to meet my new employer. This being said while these actions did not lead me into tension, there were other moments where I experienced tension as a result of my actions in liminal places.

As I consider the children's experiences of tension within liminal places, I am struck by the idea that liminal places are arguably unique, temporal, contextual and situational. What might be liminal for one person may not be so for another. The liminal places I saw the children as experiencing were unique and in relation with their stories to live by, stories shaped by previous school experiences, multiple landscapes, and family stories.

The children responded to liminal places in differing ways. Dana spoke of the tensions she felt when starting a new school. Rather than speaking particularly to any one moment, Dana chose to tell a general story about all of her first days of school. This emphasized not only the number of days she experienced in new buildings, but also the vulnerability she seemed to feel each time she entered a new school landscape. Dana spoke of new classrooms as places where she did not talk. Recess on unknown playgrounds, for Dana, were times she preferred to move rather than stay fixed in one place. It seemed not talking in the classroom and walking about the playground were some of the ways Dana responded to the tensions she felt in these liminal places, places that emphasized how she was unknown on an unknown landscape.

Liminal places are temporally transitory and the circumstances surrounding them may be defined by the time and place in which they occur. It seems Dana's first days of school were composed of liminal places, but as the school year progressed, the occurrence of these kinds of liminal places dissipated for Dana. This is not to suggest liminal places, however, are one time experiences once individuals become accustomed to a context. Landscapes are not static and as such people may enter into places of liminality in a reoccurring manner in a familiar context. By the end of October, while Dana knew many of her classmates and trusted Song, the morning she arrived at school on the day of the Halloween party without a costume was another moment where she was hovering again on the threshold. This liminal place belonged to Dana and not to anyone else in the classroom. As a way to exit the threshold, Dana immediately spoke to me, someone she thought understood her reasons for not celebrating Halloween. This was a complicated moment, for although Dana attempted to exit this liminal place, I responded that I often celebrated different things in different places and perhaps, momentarily, blocked Dana's departure from the threshold. As Dana and I negotiated our understanding of what different traditions meant to each of us, it is possible my explanation bumped into Dana's understandings of herself. Dana was quite firm Halloween was not a tradition she celebrated. By drawing upon my narratives of experience while I spoke to Dana, I may have unintentionally implied Dana should take part in Halloween by using my experiences as an example and thus caused a possible bumping place between us.

The classroom was a context Dana was familiar with; yet, despite this, it was still a dynamic place full of potential for the experience of further liminal places. The circumstances creating this place of liminality were, indeed, unique to Dana while at the same time were also temporally anchored to a particular date upon the school calendar, a holiday situation that arguably would not arise again until the following year. Yet, temporally locating liminal places to particular times of the year like first days of school or particular holidays takes away the complexity of what it means to hover on the threshold. Liminal places have the potential to contextually occur at any moment in any place to any one person, children and adults alike. In Song's classroom I was known by the children as Ms. Mitton, a friend of their teacher's and someone whom they could depend upon and ask questions. In the in-classroom place I knew fairly well the stories told of me. Once I left the security of the in-classroom place and ventured out into other areas of the school, however, the stories I knew of myself at Streamside were replaced with the stories I did not know, stories which perhaps positioned me as a researcher from the university. Despite Song's classroom only being a short walk down the hallway from where I was, its location, at times, seemed much farther away depending upon where I was and who was in that place with me.

Outside of Song's classroom I felt uncertain and those were places I did not visit very frequently or stay for long periods within. Despite my awareness of how I felt outside of the classroom, this was not something I had considered while planning the dates and location of my lunchtime conversations with the children. This caught me unaware the day Owen and I had our first lunch hour discussion. Although Owen and I knew each other in Song's classroom, changing the location of our relationship created tension. Because we were outside the classroom context which shaped our relationship, his stories of me, my stories of him, and our stories of ourselves in relation, Owen seemed to be filled with tension and I, too, in response to him. Upon reflection, moving into this liminal place and the tension this room initially generated, lingered for Owen and me. Our relationship in this room felt very different to me than our relationship in the classroom. By bringing us here, I bumped into Owen and his stories to live by, stories created in other school contexts. Based upon his concern that others might wonder why he was in that room with me, it is apparent Owen was aware new locations, such as our meeting room, might generate new stories told of him. Accompanying this was the danger these new stories might position him negatively.

While liminal places may occur once in particular places as I experienced with Owen, they may also repetitively occur and be related to specific locations on the school landscape. The gymnasium was one such location for Owen. As previously detailed in his narrative account, physical education was not a subject area in which Owen excelled. Younger than most of his classmates and not as athletically gifted at that time, Owen struggled to run as quickly and develop the various game skills in the ways in which his friends excelled. This was an ongoing situation throughout the year and, occasionally, Owen, in his attempts to leave this liminal place, would cover his lack of ability by pretending he sustained an injury.

Responses to moving into liminal places are multiple, unique to whom the individual is and not necessarily to the length of time a person has been located in a particular context. For example, Lilly, in response to the book *What you Know First* (MacLachlan & Moser, 1995), often used this particular text to explain her feelings about being from somewhere else and how she knew what it was like to miss a place. This may not seem liminal. Yet, Lilly's insistence on returning to this topic perhaps suggests her feelings of tension surrounding how to share her cultural heritage with others. Like Owen and his gym class injuries or Dana and her movement about the playground her initial days in school, perhaps Lilly's telling of this story was a way for her to leave the liminality of not talking about her culture in school.

It should also be said liminal places do not necessarily always bring about action. Yet, it is important to consider, perhaps, responses to liminal places are learned over time and are the beginnings of shifts in an individual's stories to live by. Possibly, Dana knew walking about the playground created opportunities for meeting new friends. It is also probable Owen believed his friends might not notice his lack of athletic ability if he could cover up a mistake with an injury. Perhaps, Lilly felt by talking about being from another place, she was tentatively shaping a new story to live by, one in which she emphasized her cultural heritage in school as well as at home. Thinking about the children within the context of liminality I am reminded of myself and the tensions I have experienced in liminal places on school landscapes, places where I struggled to understand the people and the events occurring around me and myself in relation with them.

The Nature of Relational Tensions Situated within the Professional Knowledge Landscape of School

As a teacher and as a researcher, the professional knowledge landscape (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) metaphor is a way for me to understand the context of Streamside School. Clandinin and Connelly (1995) describe school landscapes as contexts potentially able to “create epistemological dilemmas” for teachers as narratively understood by the “secret, sacred, and cover stories” (p.4)[96]. Writing about the tensions teachers experience as they live within and move across school landscapes, Clandinin and Connelly (1995) describe these tensions as suggestive of “competing” and “conflicting” stories[97]. The landscape metaphor allowed me to locate the relational tensions I saw as shaping Dana’s, Lilly’s and Owen’s curriculum making experiences within in and out-of-classroom places.

For Owen and Dana, attempting to live out what they knew of themselves on an unfamiliar school landscape, seemed to be particularly challenging. Because I understand school landscapes as dynamic sites of interaction, I was especially curious about the ways Dana’s and Owen’s understandings of themselves shifted. Attending to the kinds of stories they told and the landscape places in which they occurred helped me to think about the ways relational tension possibly contributed to their shifting stories to live by.

Adding complexity to school landscapes are children who arrive with school experiences composed in other contexts. Rodman (2003) and her notion of “multilocality” suggests one dimension of multilocality refers to its “reflexive relationships with places” as anyone removed from “his or her familiar place, or from the possibility of local identity” is attuned to “contrasts between the known and the unknown” (p.212). Rodman suggests it is likely a person may see “a new landscape in terms of familiar ones” (p.212). Rodman’s notion of multilocality reminds me of how Lilly, Owen, and Dana read their classroom landscapes in differing ways. For Lilly,

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[96] Secret stories are the stories teachers tell of their classrooms, sites in which they are able to put into practice their beliefs away from the dominant stories of school. The stories that teachers tell outside of their classrooms in places shaped by authority and policies, like staff meeting rooms, are understood as cover stories told to uphold dominant school stories.

[97] Conflicting stories are stories told by teachers which collide with prevailing stories of school whereas competing stories are stories that exist in positive tension with dominant stories of school.

Streamside School was a place she referred to as somewhere that felt like home, a place where her school experiences and relationships with peers and teachers were located. Conversely, at the beginning of the year for Dana and Owen, Streamside School was unfamiliar, an unfamiliarity that emphasized what and who they did not know. Although they knew generally what to expect at Streamside and in the classroom, this knowing was composed in other school contexts, some of which occurred in places outside of Canada.

Like Rodman, I believe, unknown contexts, such as new school buildings, may be read by individuals for familiarity. Yet, I would also add that viewing a new landscape in this way increases an individual's awareness of what is not known. Beyond the familiarity of classrooms, schedules, and school supplies, Streamside was for both Dana and Owen a relational mystery. Their previous school experiences, in combination with family stories of school, shaped Dana's and Owen's in-classroom interactions, as they read the landscape as familiar in some ways and profoundly unfamiliar in other ways.

Recalling his first day of school, Owen spoke of butterflies in his stomach followed by a period of time when he felt without friends. Dana spoke of not going into Song's classroom on her first day of school and the days which followed where she did not play with anyone at recess. For Owen and Dana, children who have experiences and first days in other schools, Streamside School was initially more about being a liminal place emphasizing who and what they were *not* in relation with. The stories told by Owen and Dana about their first days at school do not disrupt dominant stories told of school. It is assumed children moving into new schools will often find the initial period of time challenging. Yet, generalizing experiences in this manner and smoothing over the landscape in which experiences are situated is troublesome for "places are not inert…they are politicized, culturally relative, historically, specific, local and multiple constructions" (Rodman, 2003, p. 204-205).

Dana's Reading of the Classroom Landscape Shaping Her Cautious Interactions

Both Dana and Owen entered Streamside School storied as newcomers despite Dana's short stint at Streamside the preceding school year. Although Dana knew some of her peers from the year before, she spoke of her shyness and the extended length of time it took her to become accustomed to new friends at the beginning of the year in Song's class. Owen also spoke of his nervousness on his first day of school in addition to his fear he would not make any friends because, he explained, this was something that had happened before.

Entering with these stories of school shaped the ways Owen and Dana lived in Song's classroom throughout the fall. Particular to Dana, early on, was the way she rarely participated during whole group discussions. In conversations with me she attributed her lack of involvement to shyness making me wonder if her initial shyness was a story she lived by, a way of avoiding intense relational tensions in new places as suggested by her, in her own words, that it took her a long time to get used to new friends. From her actions it is apparent Dana understood there were relational tensions shaping the landscape of her classroom. Seeing the classroom landscape for the liminal place it was, Dana attempted to decrease the intensity of the relational shifts she was experiencing as seen in the ways she said very little during moments when the class was engaged in large discussions. Dana strove to minimize her relational tensions by attending carefully to her classmates, as evident in her concern that she might forget her classmates' new names, cultural names they had shared in response to their reading of the picture book *The Name Jar* (Choi, 2003). In addition to these examples is Dana's first all-about-me folder, a folder she was unable to complete soon after her arrival to Song's classroom. It seems to me rather than taking the chance of completing her collage and bumping into her classmates' ideas about her cultural background, Dana chose to leave the folder incomplete. As noted, this folder proceeded to repeatedly bump into Dana's relational knowledge of herself throughout the school year. This began to change once Dana and I began to discuss the possibilities for a new all-about-Dana folder during our lunch hour conversations. This change in Dana became more pronounced as the citizenship education project became an ongoing part of the classroom landscape

What made Dana's first all-about-me folder fascinating was that it pointed me towards the reoccurring tensions shaping her experiences within curriculum making. It seemed the folder was something Dana felt comfortable expressing tension about rather than talking about any of the tensions she may have felt about her classmates or curricular events occurring in the classroom. Perhaps, because of her respect for her classmates, it was easier for Dana to express her tensions around an inanimate object as opposed to naming any one of her peers and/or her concerns about how she, a Muslim, might be received by them. It is also interesting to note that once Dana began to create a new folder and later a new collage about herself, her tension around the first folder dissipated. In a comparison between her earlier and later work, she spoke of how the first folder was not like her because it was "all about objects". The shift in how Dana participated in the classroom was partially related to her second attempt at an all-about-me folder and later more directly connected to the citizenship education project. It seemed for Dana sustaining the right relational tension with others in the classroom lived in the ways she was encouraged to share who she was on the landscape of her family home. Dana's emergence as an active contributor to classroom activities represents the shift Dana experienced in her stories to live by, a shift relationally connected and mediated by Song and her classmates.

Owen's Reading of the Classroom Landscape Shaping His Bumpy Interactions

Unlike Dana, Owen did not move cautiously. Reading the new classroom as a place where he needed to make friends, he actively participated. He often joined whole group discussions and worked willingly in small groups with his classmates. While being active with his friends at recess helped Owen make and maintain his friendships, being determined to show his intelligence and independence as he worked with his peers occasionally did not. This sometimes led to abrupt shifts in his relationships as evident when he refused to collaborate with his group upon the castle they were building. Reading the situation in this moment with knowledge from another time and place, Owen's stories to live by bumped hard into and, perhaps, became momentarily entangled with his classmates and their stories to live by. In these moments Owen was hovering on the threshold. Although he acted upon what he knew, his subsequent tears emphasized the "unsteadiness" he felt and his "lack of clarity about exactly where [he] belong[ed] and what [he] should be doing, or want[ed] to be doing" (Heilbrun, 1999, p.3). In this moment Owen was physically present in Song's classroom. Metaphorically speaking, however, his stories to live by were straddling multiple landscapes entangled with the lives of multiple people as he attempted to negotiate who he was with his peers within their curriculum making.

Although this was a bumping place felt by Owen, later when I asked Owen about it, he assured me he and his group managed to complete their castle much in the same manner he reassured me our lunch meeting room no longer bothered him. Owen did not dwell on the tension or his feelings of the castle moment. Instead he chose to emphasize the completeness of their project, something which initially made me wonder why he chose to tell a cover story rather than what had occurred. Perhaps, this is a moment where Owen's stories to live by bumped into his classmates and then proceeded to bounce back? Clandinin and Connelly (1995) found that teachers colliding with prevailing stories of school often tell cover stories rather than conflicting stories that might put them at "peril" (p. 157). It is possible, then, that Owen was hopeful that by choosing to ignore the tension, which shaped this moment, perhaps, his classmates would as well.

If the tension surrounding the castle moment had been a singular incident perhaps ignoring the tension of this moment might have been plausible, yet there are other examples of tension I saw as occurring within Owen's curriculum making. For example, later in the spring in response to a misunderstanding he had with his friend, Liam, he attempted to stop Liam from telling on him. It seemed sustaining the right relational tension for Owen, a tension in which he strove to find openings into his classmates' stories to live by, lived in competition with preserving his own stories to live by. Perhaps, Owen felt responding to his classmates' tensions by shifting his story of how he interacted with them was threatening to who he was. It would also suggest that while bumping places may repeatedly occur for individuals, they, despite their impact and frequency, might not shift an individual's stories to live by in immediate and drastic ways.

Thinking about Owen and the manner in which he continued to metaphorically bump into his classmates throughout the school year suggests stories to live by are not shifted easily within curriculum making. Perhaps, time and further experiences are also significant contributors to mediating shifts. It would also suggest Owen, at that moment in time, was still uncertain as to how he was being storied by others in his classroom and was reluctant to shift a story he felt had helped him on previous landscapes.

Lilly's Reading of the Classroom Landscape Shaping Her Relationship Making

Differing in many ways from Dana and Owen was Lilly and her relational knowledge of the classroom. Throughout the year Lilly demonstrated her knowing of the school landscape and of herself in that context in the ways she interacted with others. This was seen in the moments she welcomed Jean Clandinin and me into the classroom and in the ways she referred to her peers, the boys and girls of Song's class, as her friends. Lilly's assuredness lived in relation with her certainty that she was known by her peers and teachers on the landscapes of her classroom and school.

Although Lilly was storied by others as someone with a history at Streamside School, what fascinated me about Lilly was her insistence on also being known as someone from another place as seen in the ways she discussed her birthplace. This was a story she returned to throughout the school year. Adding further complexity to this story was how it seemed interwoven within a recent story she had about moving into a nearby neighborhood. This move was made within close proximity of her old house, yet, according to Lilly, it was difficult because she no longer lived near her close friend Ella and other friends. Unlike Owen and Dana who wanted to be known on this school landscape, Lilly knew who she was in school. Yet, she also wanted to emphasize what was unknown about her. Why did Lilly want to be storied in this way? Was it because of her security in knowing who she was at Streamside? Was it an attempt to be a part of the stories she inherited, stories emphasizing her parents' arrival from another place? Was it in response to the relational tensions she felt when others did not story her as someone of Taiwanese heritage? I cannot say with certainty what it was. However, the ways Lilly attended to her relationships in school and at home leads me to believe it was all of what I suggested. It was a way for her to convey her multiplicity to others, a way that honored her love of school, her family, and her connections to a culture far removed from where she lived. Moving in knowing ways on the school landscape for Lilly also meant responding to her relational tensions and teaching others about who she was at home away from school.

Thinking about the ways Lilly responded to her relational tensions was significant in my understanding about her. When Ella, Lilly's best friend, went to Brunei for a month with her family to visit relatives, Lilly spoke of Ella's missing presence in the classroom as something like the melting of butter. Lilly, using her butter metaphor, explained while Ella was gone, it felt like she had melted away to somewhere else. This conversational moment between Lilly and me was noteworthy for in a following conversation while talking about the butter metaphor she went on to explain again why moving from her house to a new neighborhood was difficult as she left behind many friends. Moving to a new neighborhood, it seemed, positioned Lilly temporarily in a liminal place, a place without friends. This proceeded to bump into her stories to live by as someone with many friends known as a storied person upon the landscape of her neighborhood. Perhaps, as well, Ella's absence in the classroom reminded Lilly of the tensions she felt when she first moved to her new neighborhood. Ella's absence seemed to shift for Lilly her relational understanding of the classroom. Without Ella alongside her, Lilly may have found she was positioned differently within her interactions in curriculum making. Taking into account the ways in which Lilly responded to Ella's absence from school and to both Jean Clandinin and me at the beginning of the school year, emphasizes the relational ways Lilly was reading the landscape of her classroom. It seems Lilly was aware of her tensions and how these were interconnected with the arrival of newcomers or the departure of a close friend.

Lilly, out of the children to whom I attended closely, was the most relationally knowledgeable about Streamside School. Over time, and as detailed in her narrative account, my understanding of Lilly shifted. I initially understood her as someone whose ways of knowing in school were due to her experiences over time at Streamside. Attending more closely to the ways Lilly interacted with others, I began to move towards a more complex understanding of Lilly as someone whose ways of knowing in school were situated within her experiences there and in the ways she attended to her relationships. Attending to the particularities of individuals was a family story and this family story lived large in Lilly and in the ways she negotiated who she was with her classmates, Song, and me, ways that also enabled Lilly to read her school landscape in complex ways.

In October 2006, during my initial weeks in Song's classroom, I had the opportunity to visit my brother and his family in Ontario that Thanksgiving weekend. Much of the weekend was spent with my nephew Nolan who, at the time, was 9 months old. From this visit, I have a vivid memory and that was a moment in which Nolan and I read together the picture book *Are you my Mother?* (Eastman, 2002). Using the title question of the book, a baby bird in search of his mother asks a variety of animals and objects if there is any relation between them. The story ends happily with his mother's arrival and the baby bird's discovery that she had been off looking for food. At the time I read the story I did not make any connections between it and any of the children in the classroom. It was not until much later in the year, during a time when I was thinking about Lilly that I returned to this particular book and the feeling of movement it generated within me.

As I read field texts mindful of Lilly, I was struck by the ways in which she moved across her classroom landscape interacting with her peers. Lilly, like the baby bird in search of his mother encountering many different characters and the occasional object, asked questions and attended to their answers. Initially, I wondered if Lilly was, indeed, in search of something like the baby bird. Lilly's questions, however, were asked from an understanding of relationship. Lilly articulated her relational knowledge as something that entailed asking questions and respecting others' differences. Asking questions and keeping their answers in her mind was one of the ways Lilly strove to sustain the right tension between her and others.

When I first entered Song's classroom, I thought I had a fairly clear understanding of what it was to live relationally. Initially, I thought living relationally referred to something that did not create any tension. During the process of developing my research puzzle and writing my proposal, I talked about wanting to inquire into tension-filled moments within children's curriculum making. I did not, however, extend this interest of mine to how I might live relationally alongside the children and Song. In my own mind these notions were separate. Therefore, it was puzzling to me during lunchtime conversations with Lilly that tensions occasionally arose within me as a result of the questions Lilly asked. Often in response to the questions I had about her, Lilly would respond with her own questions. On other occasions, before I could begin our discussion and point it in the direction I hoped it might go, Lilly would initiate the conversation and occasionally startle me with her attempts to see things from my perspective.

In conversation with her and, her mother, Li-ying, Li-ying asked me a question about how my mother had felt when I moved to Turkey in 1998. Before I could respond, Lilly answered for me and suggested my mother must have been "very sad." There were other moments where Lilly demonstrated the ways she traveled to others' worlds (Lugones, 1987), such as her comments about how Song might need Jean Clandinin and me on the afternoons of the citizenship education project as well as how her grandparents probably missed her mother, Li-ying. These are some of the ways Lilly attempted to imagine how others might feel. Lilly's relationship making was a family story, a story which emphasized helping others and contributing thoughtfully to society as taught to me by, Lilly's father, Tai-shan, and his emphasis upon two metaphors, a pair of chopsticks and an umbrella. Both of these metaphors were used to convey the workings of a healthy family, each part serving a purpose for the collective whole.

My own tensions in response to Lilly's questions emerged from who I was trying to understand myself to be in Lilly's classroom and in her home. As the researcher, I was focused upon trying to understand Lilly and could not see in these moments how Lilly's questions, her insistence on including me in the conversation and my lived experiences, were a part of who Lilly was. Andrews (2007), commenting upon the complexities of cross-cultural research, writes "we are better researchers when we push ourselves to confront those aspects of our work that cause us discomfort" (p.498). Living alongside Lilly helped me to consider the significance of the tensions I felt as they arose. These were moments in which I occasionally felt myself pulling away and wondering if I was doing the "right" thing as a researcher by answering her questions and extending the conversation to also include me. Reflecting upon the tensions I felt as I bumped into the questions Lilly asked, I am reminded of the sailboat image I wrote of earlier. As a sailboat moves across a body of water some part of its hull is always in contact with the water beneath it. The nature of the water determines the ways in which the sailboat responds.

Like the baby bird searching for his mother, Lilly wanted to know who Lilly and Jennifer were in relation. Caine and Steeves (2007), playing with their kite metaphor and the researcher and research participant relationship, ask "how hard can we press each other, how hard can we tug and how high can we fly the kite" (p. 8)? They suggest "any amount of pulling and tugging, the teasing and releasing of tension is a response to the wind, the strength and vulnerability of the other" (p.8). My response to their questions is from a space of reflection, questions that I learned living alongside Lilly and in the ways she found openings into my stories to live by and in doing so encouraged me to see openings into hers. Who are you in my space? Who am I in yours? Who are we in this space we have created together?

Negotiating Lives Within a Curriculum of Lives: Tension-Filled, Vulnerable Negotiations

The moments I spent living alongside the children and Song assist me in my thinking about the significance of tension within curriculum making and the ways people's tensions might be attended to vulnerably. In both of the narrative accounts written about Owen and Dana, I described a moment in which Song led a whole class discussion in response to the picture book *Tea with Milk* (Say, 1999). This was the second time Song chose to discuss this text. On this occasion she invited the children to think about what they did at home that might be different than the ways their peers lived at home. It was during this conversation Song shared with the children a personal story from her childhood, a story in which she described herself as a young Chinese girl wanting to fit in alongside everyone else in the small rural town in which she lived. As an example of what she meant, Song told the children that as a child the lunches she took to school were made of food she did not enjoy as she did want her peers to make fun of the Chinese dishes she regularly ate at home. During the discussion that followed Owen spoke of how he was called "Chinese boy" in his old school and Dana spoke of how her cultural traditions were called stupid by a former classmate. In response to the children Song too spoke of moments she was made fun of for being different. She suggested to the class that people occasionally made fun of things they did not understand and she asked the children to think about how they might help others understand the differences which composed each of them.

Aoki (1991) suggests an experienced teacher dwells within “tensionality” (p.161) between the landscapes of the curriculum-as-plan and the lived curriculum of the classroom. Aoki contends by staying with the tensions of this space, a teacher transforms it meaningfully to include lives alongside curricular expectations; thus, disturbing the traditional curriculum-as-plan landscape with a “multiplicity of curricula” (Aoki, 1993, p.258). The curricular emphasis is, in this sense, upon the lives of the teacher and children and how their presence is understood by the teacher as “identity as effect” (Aoki, 1993, p. 260).

Bringing Aoki’s understanding of tension to this particular moment of curriculum making, allows me to see the ways Song stayed with and mediated tension to include hers and the children’s lives. By choosing to move away from comfortable experiences, Song shared a story that positioned her vulnerably. Emphasizing a period in her life when as a child she was exposed to the teasing of others, Song talked about the ways in which she reacted to her classmates’ opinions. In this moment Song chose to stay within tensionality. In return Owen and Dana told stories of moments where they too felt vulnerable to the criticism of others. In varying ways they each made a choice to respond vulnerably to the other. Rather than smoothing over the tensions of their past experiences by not telling these stories, each of them shared a story suggesting they understood one another’s experiences in resonating ways.

This moment, however, was not only composed of Song, Dana, and Owen. By asking the whole class to think about how they might help others understand differences, Song was attempting to create for all of the children the possibility to think of themselves in relation with diverse others. According to Aoki, as the teacher lives between the curricular landscapes of lived and planned, she is making sense of the tensions not so much as an attempt to smooth things over, but as a way to attend fully to the multiplicity of lived curricula present in her classroom. Dwelling within the tensions of this space, as suggested by Aoki, positions the teacher vulnerably in relation with the children that compose her classroom. I agree with Aoki's point, and I would add, based upon my understanding of the tensions shaping Song's and the children's interactions in curriculum making, that they were positioned vulnerably in relation with each other.

Making space for diversity within curriculum is an area which has been explored by Huber, Murphy, and Clandinin (2003). Regular peace candle gatherings were implemented as a way to attend to the tensions of teachers', researchers', and children's lives. The authors describe these gatherings as shaped by liminality, moments where they tried "to step outside comfortable plotlines" (p.351) of who they and the children were in school. Their work highlights to me the individual nature of negotiating a curriculum of diversity is, as children and teachers "move away from a more scripted way of being in the classroom… [to] a making-sense space for moments in their lives in school" (p.352).

As Song, Owen, and Dana strove to make sense of each other and their past experiences, during this moment as their lives met, the relational shifts which occurred were not simply Song's, Owen's, and Dana's lives meeting and bouncing back. This was a moment which brought "an intense knowing of the *other*" (Huber & Whelan, 2000, emphasis in the original p.115) as Song's story reverberated (Huber et al., 2004) back through the stories of Dana's and Owen's, reverberations that focused upon their vulnerable negotiations, who they were in relation with one another and with the other children. The presence of their vulnerability further mediated the space in which Song and the children shared their stories as they stretched to understand one another and, possibly, to understand future others who may not understand them.

From Song and the children I learned tension and vulnerability are a vital part of curriculum making (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992), moments where individuals attempt to understand themselves and others while awakening to the possibility of who they might be. Song, mediating the discussion, encouraged each of the children to think about how they might help others understand the differences which composed each of them. The children were not only encouraged to travel to Song's, Owen's, and Dana's worlds (Lugones, 1987), they were also encouraged to think about traveling to the worlds of those who might not understand them. Staying with the tension of this moment and sharing stories that positioned them vulnerably, it is possible Song's, Owen's, and Dana's stories reverberated back across the stories of the other children. This kind of education, curriculum composed between the curriculum-as-plan and lived curriculum (Aoki, 1993) of the classroom landscape, suggests a way of attending, a way of negotiating with tension. Tension in this light may be understood as educative. It would seem it is necessary to enter into negotiations where we, teachers, children, and researchers, all experience tensions and in doing so we all become vulnerable in our attempts to understand ourselves and others relationally.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Learning from the Relational Tensions of Children's Lives in Classroom Curriculum Making

Making the Transition: From the Children's Lives to the Social Significance of this Research

A reader may be wondering what they can learn from this body of work, a depiction of Lilly's, Dana's, and Owen's lives in school as they sought to sustain their narrative coherence (Carr, 1986). Moving away from the children's lives and thinking in this manner challenges me and reminds me, in some ways, of my initial weeks in Song's classroom. That too was a period of transition as I moved away from imagining who the children might be to living among them. Leaving the classroom brought another period of transition, a time when I began to think about the possible ways in which the tensions surrounding the children's curriculum making were living in relation with the children's stories to live by. As I strove to understand this, I, too, felt tension. This awoke me to the ways I was unable to shift my understanding and take in what Dana, Lilly, and Owen were, perhaps, trying to convey during particular moments over the course of the school year.

Reflecting upon these transitions makes me aware of the shift I experienced as I prepared for the writing of this chapter. The shift I speak of is not singular in nature. Relational fluctuations occurred throughout the course of the inquiry and indeed characterized it. Different aspects of the study contributed to this: as I moved from one phase of the study to the next, as relationships deepened, and as I moved upon different landscapes. All of these shaped and shifted the unfolding of the study. But the shifts I experienced as I began to write initial drafts of this chapter were particularly jarring. Standing back and considering the social significance of this work positioned me differently with the children, their families, and Song. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest asking questions of social significance "are…complex as we ask in the midst of trying to negotiate a new way of being in relation with our participants, and as we fight against our desire to let field texts speak for themselves" (p.130). The struggle I felt was shaped by relational considerations, yet it also allowed me to see the importance of contextualizing my work theoretically.

My experiences alongside the children and Song have taught me that classroom curriculum making is situational, and of the moment (Chang & Rosiek, 2003; Chan, 2006; Hastie, Martin & Buchanan, 2006; Huber, Murphy, & Clandinin, 2003; Gaskell, 2003; Jegede & Aikenhead, 1999). Negotiating a curriculum of diversity (Huber, Murphy, & Clandinin, 2003), I also learned, entails ongoing improvisation, improvisations which disrupt the curriculum-as-plan landscape (Aoki, 1993) by returning the emphasis to teachers, children's and families' lives.

Presently, I am faced with moving away from individual particularities and attending to the social significance of this work and its contributions to the research field. My relationships with Owen, Dana, and Lilly have deepened my understanding for staying wakeful to the experiences children, in relation with their families and teachers, are living on shifting school landscapes.

In the Midst of a Shifting School Landscape

Faced with situating my work, I returned to the beginnings of this inquiry, a period of time in which my research puzzle emerged. During the development of my study, in order to understand the significance of my research, I followed the example of Clandinin et al. (2006) and drew upon Maxine Greene's notion of seeing people's lives big and seeing people's lives small. Greene (1995) wrote,

> To see things or people small, one chooses to see from a detached point of view, to watch behaviors from the perspective of a system, to be concerned with trends and tendencies rather than the intentionality and concreteness of everyday life. To see things or people big, one must resist viewing other human beings as mere objects or chess pieces and view them in their integrity and particularity instead. One must see from the point of view of the participant in the midst of what is happening if one is to be privy to the plans people make, the initiatives they take, the uncertainties they face.
>
> When applied to schooling, the vision that sees things big brings us in close contact with details and particularities that cannot be reduced to statistics or even to the measurable. (p.10*)*

As I wrote my proposal in preparation for my time in the field, using Greene's notion of seeing people's lives big and seeing them small helped me to wonder about the big of children's, families', and teachers' lives in schools as they were shaped by policies and procedures. Returning again to the inquiry's beginnings reminded me of the ways I situated my research within classroom curriculum making in diverse school contexts as well as two contextual changes shaping Canada's school landscapes: demographic changes[98] and standardized testing.

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[98] The growth rate of migrants has been accelerating, increasing from 1.4 per cent in 1990-1995 to 1.9 per cent in 2000-2004. In developed countries the number of migrants increased by 33 million between 1990 and 2005, whereas in developing countries the increase was barely 3 million. Consequently, in 2005, 61 per cent of all international migrants lived in developed countries (United Nations, 2006).

In Canada provincial achievement tests are regularly administered and are increasingly driving teachers' practices. For example, Alberta, with provincial achievement tests in grades 3, 6, and 9 and the High School Diploma Examination at the end of grade 12 is conscious of standardized education. According to one survey, many Alberta teachers (31%) choose not to teach grades 3, 6, and 9 so as to avoid provincial achievement testing years (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2001). The testing emphasis in Alberta exemplifies the growing focus on more accountability for teachers and children through achievement testing, a trend that is occurring across Canada.

Portelli & Vibert (2001) suggest the recent accountability debate in Canada arose in response to public concerns surrounding the quality of educational standards in schools. The authors assert this debate is a "distracter" (p.75) used to sidetrack people from asking questions around schooling in terms of funding and teacher support. Portelli and Vibert make me consider the political underpinnings beneath the debate and the ways accountability through mandated testing is possibly used to curry public favor.

In the United States a profound contextual change shaping its school landscapes is the reform movement *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), a movement which aims to achieve accountability and equitable education through means of standardized testing (Hollingsworth & Gallego, 2007). Despite its original premise, to reduce learning

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- The 2006 Census enumerated 6,186,950 foreign-born people in Canada. They accounted for virtually one in five (19.8%) of the total population, the highest proportion in 75 years (Statscan, 2007).
- In terms of immigration, Alberta is the fourth largest immigrant-receiving province. Most of Alberta's immigrants come from China, the Philippines, India, Korea and Pakistan. Most are working age and more than half are skilled workers. They also are well educated; over 42% of Alberta's immigrants had a university degree. Most are destined for Calgary (60%) or Edmonton (30%) (Alberta Finance Statistics, 2006).
- The annual average employment growth rate is projected to be 1.8% for 2004-2008. A major challenge will be matching the skills of Alberta's workforce to the demands of the new workplace and the evolving economy (Government of Alberta Human Resources and Employment, 2004).

disparities between children of different socioeconomic backgrounds, NCLB continues to receive harsh criticism by research which expounds its inadvertent consequences[99] (Darling-Hammond, 2004; 2007).

As I read this body of work anew, I was struck by a political tendency to reduce children's school experiences to achievement test scores. This thought returned me to the ways I came to know Lilly, Dana, Owen, Song, and their families. The relational tensions surrounding the children's lives and their interactions in curriculum making, I knew, could not be represented in provincial achievement test scores. Entering into Song's classroom as an individual who has lived on a school landscape heavily shaped by testing, I expected to see and resonate with Song's and the children's test-felt tensions. The degree of high stakes testing that is present in the United States and Turkey, in the ways it shapes children's, teachers', and families' lives, however, was not present for the children in Song's classroom. This, I believe, was because of Song. In the classroom, Song kept the emphasis upon the children, their relationships, and negotiating curriculum with them. In doing so Song lived with much tension; as she attempted to live out competing, possibly, nascent counter stories of assessment (Murphy, Mitton, Murphy, Huber, Chung, Tinkham, Murray Orr, & Clandinin, 2008). Following Song's lead as I lived alongside her, I chose to *not* emphasize the provincial achievement test in my conversations with the children and families.

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[99] In response to the reauthorization of NCLB by the United States' Congress in the fall of 2007, the *American Educational Research Journal* published a special issue that focused upon NCLB and its formative presence in American schools (Hollingsworth & Gallego, 2007). Researchers revealed varying consequences for the ways NCLB impacted children with disabilities (Cawthon, 2007), teachers' understanding of their changing roles (Valli & Buese, 2007), low performing high schools and their funding (Balfanz, Legters, West, & Weber, 2007), and teacher motivation (Finnigan & Gross, 2007).

As an educator and researcher I am mindful of contextual changes and the ways these shape dominant stories of school and assessment. With this milieu underpinning my thoughts I consider Dana, Lilly, Owen, and Song and their future possibilities in school. Returning to their lives forces me to stop and wonder if the stories which have sustained them across multiple school landscapes will bump into dominant stories of assessment the older they become. Will Owen continue to think of himself as a good reader? Will Dana continue to find places in school where she might share her family stories? Will Lilly continue to world travel (Lugones, 1987)? Will the children's family relationships at home be shaped by future high-stakes tests, tests which may determine the universities the children attend and the careers they enter into? Will Song continue to attend to the lives of the children in her classroom? Might further accountability mandates disrupt her knowledge of curriculum making? Might this, in turn, increase the tensions Song lives with as she attempts to live according to accountability mandates while she also attempts to attend to children's particularities?

In the following, I discuss what I have learned as a teacher and as a researcher by naming and inquiring into the tensions I experienced as I lived alongside the children around their negotiations within curriculum making. Throughout the chapter I aim to keep the children, their families, and Song large in readers' minds as I discuss my learning within the context of teacher education. Towards the latter part of this chapter I consider policy and what might occur, if policy makers were to consider relational tensions within classroom curriculum making as educative. My intention, and hope, is that by doing so I create for the reader a "doorway for imagination; here is the possibility of looking at things as if they could be otherwise… [and] what moves us onto reform" (Greene,1995, p.16).

Learning as a Teacher and as a Researcher

Learning from the Children's Lives: Attending to My Own Tensions

Directing me in my understanding of Dana, Lilly, and Owen were the tensions I saw as shaping their classroom curriculum making. Living in the midst of tension is one thing; carefully thinking about tension and making meaning of it, I came to see, is quite another. As I pondered and pulled forward the tensions I thought resonated among the children's narrative accounts, I was filled with curiosity: Were the children, I wondered, during tension-filled moments within their interactions in curriculum making, sharing their knowledge of experiences and stories lived on other landscapes and situated within different relationships?

Trying to understand the negotiations and tensions underlying the children's curriculum making, made me consider the ways I felt in response to each of them. Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) writes "in meeting with teachers and prospective teachers I am trying hard to imagine something different. Paying attention to my own body is the beginning of this" (p.16). Concentrating upon the tensions I felt was a different kind of challenge, however. It asked me to attend fully to our relationships and to what my tension was saying about me, rather than the children.

One such example is my initial response to Lilly's stories about moving to a new home and about being from a different place. I struggled and looked upon her stories as puzzling, perhaps fictional, rather than part of who she was. Looking for a doorway into "imagin[ing] something different" (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004, p.16) turned me inwards as I reflected upon my childhood experiences and relationships lived within a specific geographic area. I came to see my tension as a response to something I embodied (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004), something that suggested my need to understand Lilly in ways that spoke to my childhood experiences. This I understood; yet, the tension I felt is more complex than this. The danger, for me, lay in storying Lilly in ways that experientially lived in accordance with who I was rather than with who she was.

Miller's (1998) notion of the necessary incompleteness of teachers' stories helps me to consider what I have learned living in relation with each of the children. Miller suggests individuals' identities are continually unfolding, shaped by responses to differing people and landscapes. An autobiography in-the-making, Miller suggests, is a way "to grapple with multiple versions [of who one is]…to not close down, in the press for "certainty", or around one definition of [who one thinks one] should be" (p.39). Her identity conceptualization draws my awareness to the ways my understandings of individuals, at times, lives within certainties I have composed, certainties shaped by prior experiences and landscapes.

Helping me further is Lugones (1987) and her concept of world travel. Lugones (1987) suggests that the practice of world-traveling, of "learning to travel to each other's "worlds" (p. 4), is a way to begin to see from another's perspective as "we are fully dependent on each other for the possibility of being understood" (p. 10). Also important within the concept of world travel are the notions of arrogant perception and loving perception. Arrogant perception is understood as a failure to travel to another's world or to understand someone from their point of view. Loving perception is thought to involve traveling to another's world, as it "enable[s] us to *be* through *loving* each other" (Lugones, 1987, emphasis in the original, p.8). Lugones draws my awareness to the ways I need to imagine beyond my known contexts and experiences, something that asks me to heed my tension as I travel to the children's worlds and consider their life particularities in relation with their classroom curriculum making.

Learning from the Children's Lives and the Multiplicity of Our Stories to Live by

The tensions I saw Owen as experiencing throughout the school year helped me to think about the ways children are storied during their classroom curriculum making (Chan, 2006; Clandinin et al., 2006; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Huber et al., 2003). As shared in Owen's narrative account, I wrote about the moment in which Owen prevented his classmate from contributing to the structure they were building. Writing about this made me reflect upon the tension I felt. I asked questions about who I was in relation with Owen in the unfolding of this particular instance. The negotiations around this moment of curriculum making for Owen were markedly different than any other I had observed throughout the year. Naming the tension I felt and reflecting upon the tension-filled cues I saw in Owen and his classmates made me wakeful to the ways I understood him and our relationship.

Tension was present in the way Owen did not allow Taylor to work on the castle. Tension was present in the way Owen's friend, Charlie, left the group and in the ways the other group members voiced their complaints to me. Tension was also present in Owen's tears and there was my tension in response to Owen, evident in the way I named his behavior as "stubborn" in my field note, something that made me ask: Was I his friend?

Was I the teacher's helper? Was I the researcher? In asking myself questions I became uncomfortable, not with Owen and his seeming defiance, but with the way I wanted Owen to smooth things over with his friends.

The tension I experienced made me consider the stories I was drawing upon, scripted stories of how children and teachers are to behave in school. My desire for Owen to get along with his classmates was interwoven within my disappointment that I was unable to help him negotiate. In my attempts to travel to Owen's world, I began to attend more closely to the ways I understood teachers and children in school as well as to the possibility that the experiences Owen had on different school landscapes were still deeply shaping him.

Dana and her shyness throughout the beginning half of the school year made me think about the ways I initially interpreted her lack of involvement during whole class discussions. Writing about the moment in which Dana announced to the class she was Muslim, made me attend to who Dana was and how she was trying to share with me and her classmates the importance she placed upon her faith. Also written about in Dana's narrative account is the day of the Halloween party and her concern that she had not brought a costume. As only 1 of 2 children who were Muslim in Song's classroom, I found Dana increasingly talking to me about her religion, what she did and what she did not celebrate. This made me wonder, at times, if she considered me as someone who understood her and her religious beliefs. By retelling these moments I began to attend more closely to the quiet ways I saw tensions being lived out in Dana's curriculum making. As Dana bumped into a school year calendar composed around Christian and western based celebrations, she was also attempting to live out a family story, a story which emphasized treating her classmates and their diversity respectfully.

My attempts to travel to Dana's world made me realize how alone at times she must have felt as her classmates prepared for Christian and other faith/cultural based holidays/events that she did not celebrate. There did not seem to be places outside of Song's classroom and the citizenship education project at Streamside School for Dana to share her cultural and religious beliefs. The tensions Dana felt around these matters were expressed, I believe, in her questions to me. Dana had a way of downplaying her tensions as seen in the ways she cautiously interacted with her peers throughout the fall. I now believe that Dana was skin tingling awake (Clandinin et al., 2006) in ways that her classmates of European heritage were not. I, at the same time, felt tension during those moments Dana talked to me about her faith and her celebrations. This made me attend more carefully to my own childhood landscapes and the calendar rhythms I have despite my more recent experiences as a teacher in Turkey. Simply storying Dana as shy, as I initially attempted to do, would have minimized the tensions I saw her as experiencing in her classroom curriculum making as it would have also erased her multiplicity.

Learning to attend to the tensions I felt in response to Lilly was challenging. My understanding of Lilly was initially focused upon the relative ease with which she seemed to maintain her friendships. Writing about the moments in which Lilly spoke about moving to a different house and about being from another place helped me to think about the unknown cultural landscapes which also shaped Lilly. At the same time, this also caused me to think about the cultural landscapes which shape me and which I sometimes feel far away from as a result of living in Turkey. As a Chinese-Canadian girl who had not visited the country of her cultural heritage up until that point in time, it seemed to me, Lilly acknowledged her tension in the ways she repeatedly storied herself as being from another place. This, it seemed, was something Lilly also wanted her classmates to acknowledge and by not acknowledging it they were possibly bumping into who Lilly also understood herself to be. Because of Lilly's relationship with Song, Lilly had a place in the classroom to think about who she was as a Chinese-Canadian/Taiwanese-American girl and who she might be in the future. Like Dana, however, outside of Song's classroom and the citizenship education project, there were few places in school in which Lilly could share her cultural background as well as her wonders about it. If I had not inquired into the complex tensions that both Lilly and I were experiencing, I may have storied her as a child without connections to or wonders about her cultural origins.

Thinking about the children and the ways I might have storied them makes me question the invisible backpack, similar to the invisible knapsack of white privilege that McIntosh (1988) writes about, that I may have brought with me into Song's classroom. As a child who grew up in the Canadian Maritimes I realized I had been taught to think of school landscapes as shaped accordingly to the Christian faith. My life in Ankara taught me to live differently in response to the routines shaping my former school landscape and to the people I grew to know. As I associated Turkey with different religious and cultural beliefs, learning to live in new ways made sense to me despite the challenges of attempting to do so. Yet, I can see how, once back in a Canadian context, my understanding of the school year returned to a school calendar I have known since kindergarten. The timing of school holidays and acknowledgement of particular events like Halloween and Valentine's Day were things I did not question. I planned and looked forward to them. Living alongside Dana taught me in new ways to the sleeping presence of my childhood landscapes embedded within my invisible backpack. Also residing within my backpack is the knowledge that as a child my cultural, racial heritage was not used in ways that marginalized me by my peers. In fact, my European heritage was reaffirmed throughout my schooling experiences by a curricular presence that overly emphasized the Maritime's European origins.

Reflecting upon this I understand how I was taught as a child to think of my heritage as the norm and not something "that puts others at a disadvantage" (McIntosh, 1988, Introductory section, ¶ 2). McIntosh, upon describing her "unearned skin privilege", asks "having described it [white privilege], what will I do to lessen or end it" (Introductory section, ¶ 4)? As a hopeful teacher educator and researcher I can see the ways in which I might continue to think about McIntosh's question. My future work might entail creating opportunities for preservice and experienced teachers to think about privilege as something socially constructed rather than merit based and in the ways its presence is felt in their classrooms and teaching practices.

Despite my experiences of living in another country and the complexity which it entails, I can see the moments in which I might have relied upon simpler stories of the children. Learning from the tension I felt in response to the children required me to move away from certainty to uncertainty about who I was in that moment and about who I thought the children were attempting to be. Attending in this manner is complicated. In order to smooth over the tension, I found myself, at times, tempted to story the children in ways which drew upon my narratives of experience rather than theirs.

Shaping a curriculum that is attentive to diverse lives is tension-filled. The personal plotlines that shape each of us contribute to these tensions and emphasize the need for attending to them. Yet, if I consider the presence of accountability through achievement testing across Canada's school landscapes, I am left with questions. Traditional school stories of assessment methodically demand the necessary completeness of children's and teacher's stories as implied by the presence of report cards and standardized tests. What sustains children relationally as they move across multiple landscapes? What sustains the diverse lives of teachers and children in classrooms shaped by achievement testing?

Learning from the Children's Lives and the Tensions Around Negotiating Curriculum

Attending from the perspectives of children, their families, and Song as they negotiated their lives within a curriculum of lives, I explored the children's school experiences. As depicted earlier, I noted a curricular shift in the middle of the year when Song made explicit her interest in creating for the children opportunities where they might share and reflect upon their lived experiences. Her interest developed into the citizenship education project, a project with an underpinning focus upon belonging.

In chapter seven I described a moment in which Song shared a personal story with the children in response to the picture book *Tea with Milk* (Say, 1999). This moment emphasizes the kind of curriculum making the citizenship education project generated. Attending to the children and Song during their book conversations, I came to see the ways in which their negotiations around curriculum making disrupted what Aoki (1993) refers to as curriculum-as-plan landscapes of classrooms.

In the children's attempts to try to understand each other and Song they followed her example and shared personal stories. In this moment Song mediated carefully. She asked the children to think about who they were in relation with others, as seen when she asked how they, the children, might help people who might not understand their differences. The question Song chose to ask in that moment is representative of the ways in which she purposefully stayed with the tension emerging out of their curriculum making. By telling uncomfortable stories, asking questions, attending to their answers, and redirecting the children's comments back to their classmates, Song, attended to the children's lives and their particularities while she also asked them to attend in the same manner to each other.

Under Song's guidance the tensions surrounding their negotiations as they composed curriculum were educative as the children were encouraged to think about who they were in relation with their classmates and who they might be in the future in relation with others. Often in their responses to Song some of the children, as noted earlier with Owen and Dana, became extremely involved in Song's stories. Their response to her stories and questions suggests they were creating new understandings of themselves as their lives intersected with Song's, their peers, and the text *Tea with Milk* (Say, 1999).

Sarbin (2004), writing about the impact of stories upon individuals' identity development, wrote

> The act of reading or listening to a story, in the context in which the reader's moral constructions are engaged, produces embodied self-perceptions. The greater the degree of embodied involvement in narrative-inspired imaginings, the more

> likely that the reader or listener will "feel with" or identify with the protagonist's efforts to resolve the moral issues central to a particular plot. (p.18)

As the children listened to Song's stories about her childhood and her questions to them about how they might help others understand their differences, they were also asked to think about who they were in the past and who they might become in the future. To borrow Sarbin's words, the children were "engaged" with Song's story, allowing them to "embody" their future actions and respond to her question about what they might do to help others understand the differences which composed each of them.

During this moment Song's personal practical knowledge was relationally at work. She invited the children into her stories by asking them to consider who they might be to unknown others. Elbaz-Luwisch (2004), describing the tensions that emerged within curriculum making in her classroom, writes "these activities seem to allow the students to begin a process of meaning making that are complex and provisional, ambiguous, yet grounded in the situations of their daily lives" (p.25-26). As I consider the ways Song and the children constructed meaning in this moment, meaning grounded in their lives, also accompanying it was a sense of vulnerability. For the living of such moments is one thing; to live them again, however, with others is quite another.

By staying with the tensions of their curriculum making, Song created opportunities for the children to know themselves in new ways and to consider what someone else's story might mean to them. During these moments in Song's attempts to create the right tension with and among the children, she strove to find openings into their stories to live by, openings made possible by the uncomfortable stories she chose to tell first.

Throughout the winter and spring the curriculum negotiated by Song and the children within the structure of the citizenship education project called my attention to not only the tensions which shaped these moments, but also to the diversity of stories that were shared (Huber *et. al*, 2003). Song was intentional in her mediation of tension as she and the children discussed the book *Tea with Milk* (Say, 1999). This moment showed me how difficult and complex negotiating curriculum and mediating tension is. Given that many teacher education programs are preparing individuals of European heritage to be teachers for classrooms shaped by diversity makes me wonder about their understandings of curriculum. Are they aware of curriculum as something enacted and negotiated? Are they aware that curriculum may also refer to something lived outside curriculum documents and learning benchmarks, moments which emphasize children's lives and family stories? Are they being encouraged to consider places for parents and the stories that shape and inform families' stories to live by within their curriculum making? As an individual reflecting upon my own teacher education experiences as an undergraduate and as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, I am uncertain if preservice teachers are currently being prepared in ways that allow them to understand curriculum as lived, as negotiated, as tension-filled.

Imagining New School Stories Around Narrative Understandings of Tension Within Curriculum Making

When a curriculum of lives is negotiated, the negotiations around curriculum making are tension-filled, a process that asks all of us, children, teachers, families, researchers, to think about who we are in relation with each other and with the larger milieu. Thinking about the milieu in which the children, their families and Song were situated, a larger landscape increasingly being shaped by accountability through achievement testing moves me to consider reform. Green (1995) asserts this is "the possibility of looking at things as if they could be otherwise" (p. 16).

Inquiring into the tensions I saw the children experiencing in their classroom curriculum making speaks to the complexity of attending to children's lives as their stories to live by intersect and bump with others'. The relational tensions shaping the children's lives and their interactions within curriculum making helped me to think about the ways children are storied in classrooms as a result of the tensions they display. As I wrote about each of the children, I was forced to acknowledge my own tensions. Looking closely at the ways I felt made me think carefully about my perceptions, and I awoke to the possible ways their experiences on different school and home landscapes shaped each of them. My understanding of the children shifted over time and I came to see their vulnerability in the ways they attempted to live out what they knew of themselves in school.

Understanding tension as an educative presence within Canada's changing and diverse school landscapes is vital. Tension is commonly storied as disruptive. This portrayal of tension is shaped by a systematic focus upon accountability, as teachers and children are expected to live in schools according to benchmarks of achievement. Given the changing demographics of Canadian schools, it is likely classrooms will continue to be contexts where diverse children's and teachers' lives meet. Thus, tensions will continue to shape curriculum making. The time needed to explore these kinds of tensions, however, is growing less in this current era of mandated testing and outcome based learning. Bateson (2004), commenting upon the debate about national standards of education across the United States, writes "surely the most important task of schooling is to initiate an open-ended process of ongoing learning that inevitably increases diversity in the society rather than uniformity" (p.404).

School stories of assessment traditionally demand the necessary uniformity of children's and teacher's stories as emphasized by mandated testing and their summative reports. This is another kind of tension and articulates another kind of vulnerability for those living on school landscapes. School stories increasingly being told are focused upon measures of accountability, generalized to reach across lives, as a way to standardize learning. As my exploration of Dana's, Lilly's, and Owen's lives has shown, the worth lies in attending to children's tensions, thoughtfully, considering the ways tension is relationally composed.

With narrative understandings of tension and curriculum making in mind, I wonder how policy making might be otherwise if policy makers were to consider policies around tension as part of curriculum making and its negotiations. Understanding policy development in this way, then, policies would need to be attentive to the diversity increasingly shaping classrooms and the importance of teachers' personal practical knowledge at work as they relationally attended to children's lives. Out of necessity tensions emerging from curriculum negotiations would be understood as a part of curriculum making and essential to teachers' and children's lives as they interacted with one another and subject matter shaped by a larger milieu. If policy makers were to attend with teachers' and children's lives as their focus, perhaps, as well, families and their stories would be included. Possibly then, dominant school stories of accountability through achievement testing would shift to accountability as something relationally composed and contextually situated rather than assessment-driven. Attending to tension is, perhaps, a way to initiate an "open-ended process of ongoing learning" (Bateson, 2004, p. 404). Attending in this way emphasizes the diversity of lives shaping classrooms, a process that asks all of us to think about who we are in relation with each other and with the larger milieu.

Closing Thoughts: Lingering Amid Landscapes

Inside one of the cupboards in my home in Ankara is where I keep items that I particularly love. At times, items fall out when I open this cupboard door, their sudden appearance occasionally taking me back to a certain time and place. One object, a clay model of the earth, seemed to drop out more easily than the rest. This memento was a gift from Tyler, one of the children in Song's classroom, and was given to me during my initial weeks in school. Keeping it company are other classroom keepsakes. In the back is a glass jar, also a gift from Song and the children, given to me on my last afternoon in the classroom. The jar is covered with multiple strips of paper, each colorful piece depicting an additional name for the jar as a way to represent our experience with the picture book *The Name Jar* (Choi, 2003).

On my last day of school towards the end of the afternoon, I read aloud the book *Imagine a Day* (Thomson, 2005). Looking at the children and Song as I turned each page, I attempted to read and turn pages slowly. As I read the last words of the book, a sentence that simply reads "Imagine…today" (p. 30), I felt myself lose the volume I needed. The seconds in between these words and the resumption of my voice seemed long. Rising up was a sense that my time in Song's classroom had, indeed, come to an end.

Reflecting upon this now, it seems fitting to me the book, *Imagine a Day*, was a part of this moment. As the year unfolded in the classroom, our imaginations opened doorways to the new and unfamiliar, the particularities that shaped each of our lives. To ignore my memory of this moment was impossible for me to do although initially I tried. Hung up on the idea of writing something profound at the end of my work I looked towards those scholars I admire. Yet, in this instance, their voices did not speak to me in the ways I had come to Lilly, Dana, Owen, their families, Song, and the children of this classroom.

As we grew to know one another, I found the shape of the inquiry I once imagined changing in response to who we were. Living alongside them, I inquired into my life and the ways I attempt to live in relation with others as I move between and upon landscapes. The profound, I came to see, lay in the particular, lay in the ways our lives unfolded together, in the ways we attempted to know one another beyond ourselves.

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